

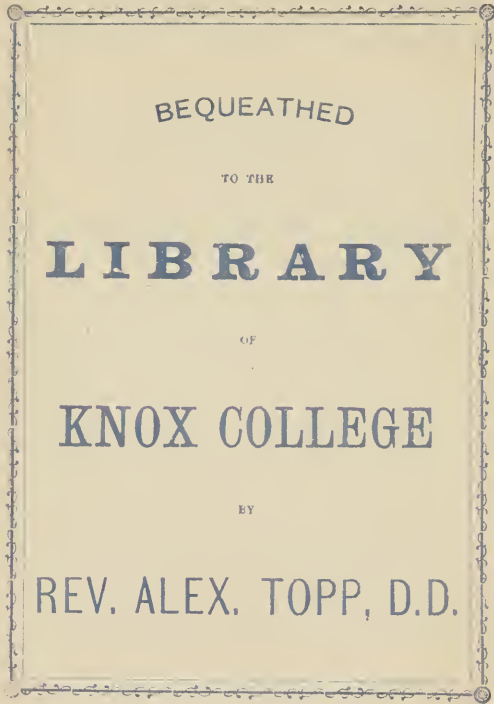
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HECUBA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SHADE OF POLYDORUS.

HECUBA.

CHORUS OF CAPTIVE WOMEN.

POLYXENA.

ULYSSES.

TALTHYBIUS.

FEMALE ATTENDANT.

AGAMEMNON.

POLYMESTOR AND HIS CHILDREN.

ARGUMENT.

AFTER the taking of Troy, the Greeks weighed anchor, and put in at the opposite Chersonese of Thrace, of which Polymestor was king,—the same place where they raised a cenotaph to Achilles, who had been buried at Troy ; and having delayed there some few days, so as to arrange their affairs, when they were going to put to sea, the shade of Achilles, appearing over the tomb, withheld the Greeks from setting sail, demanding to be offered to him as a gift of honour, Polyxena, the daughter of Priam, who had before also been betrothed to him by her father ; by reason of whom, too, Achilles was slain, being shot with an arrow by Paris and Deïphobus, when Priam was about to complete her vows of betrothal to him. The Greeks, then, remembering the good deeds they had experienced at his hands, and honouring his valour, passed a decree to sacrifice Polyxena over the tomb of the hero ; and sent the son of Laërtes to her mother Hecuba, that he might both take possession of the virgin, and by subtilty of speech (for such was the character of the man) might persuade Hecuba not to take to heart the loss of her daughter. Ulysses, accordingly, on his arrival, found the damsel taking part with him in his purpose, and persuading her mother that it was more fitting for her to die than to live unbecoming her rank. And when the virgin was sacrificed, Hecuba sent an attendant of her own along the shore, to fetch water thence, to wash the corpse of Polyxena ; but she found the body of Polydorus lying there ; for Polymestor, when he learned that Troy was taken, murdered him, and cast him into the sea, that he might keep to himself the gold which Priam a little before had sent to

him secretly with his son Polydorus, when he saw that danger was now threatening Ilium. Now there was a considerable quantity of gold, and enough even to re-establish the family of Priam. When, therefore, the slave found the corpse lying on the sea shore, she took it, and conveyed it, wrapped in her robe, to Hecuba : and deeming the corpse, before it was uncovered, to be Polyxena's, but afterwards finding it to be Polydorus, she was greatly afflicted ; but, nevertheless, to be avenged on Polymestor, contrived the following plan :—Having first communicated her intention about him to Agamemnon, she sends her own slave to Polymestor, to summon him and his children before her on a matter of urgent necessity which she had to impart. He then, not knowing that Polydorus had been found on the shore, and, at the same time being deceived by others, comes to her with his children. Hecuba informs him it was for this reason she summoned him, that she might inform him of certain treasures of gold hidden by her in Ilium ; and she leads him within the tent, telling him that she will also give him certain other property, which she had brought with her out of Troy. But within there had been concealed a large body of women ; by the aid of whom, when he had entered the tent, Hecuba puts out his eyes, and murders his children. Agamemnon afterwards judging between them, and Polymestor feigning many excuses for the murder of Polydorus, Hecuba gained the advantage, convicting him of having slain her son for the sake of the gold, and not for the reasons he alleged, and having Agamemnon's judgment also on her side.

The scene of the drama is supposed to be in the Thracian Chersonese, over against Troy : and the chorus consists of Trojan captive women who are to succour Hecuba.

ANOTHER ARGUMENT.

AFTER the siege of Ilium, the Greeks put in at the Chersonese, opposite the Troad ; and Achilles, appearing by night, demanded that one of the daughters of Priam should be sacrificed. The Greeks, therefore, respecting the commands of the hero, tore Polyxena away from Hecuba and sacrificed her ; and Polymestor, king of the Thracians, murdered Polydorus, one of Priam's sons. Now Polymestor had received him from Priam, in charge, with a treasure of money. But when the city was taken, wishing to keep possession of his wealth, he set about to murder him, and cared little for friendship in calamity. The body was cast out into the sea : the waves washed it ashore near the tents of the female captives ; and Hecuba, seeing the corpse, recognised it ; and communicating her intention to Agamemnon, she sent for Polymestor to come to her with his children (concealing what had occurred), pretending she would point out to him certain treasures that were in Ilium ; but when he arrived, his sons she murdered, and himself she deprived of his eyes. And defending herself before the Greeks, she came off victorious over her accuser ; for she was decided not to have instigated the atrocity, but to have requited the instigator.

HECUBA.



SHADE OF POLYDORUS.

1—15.]

I AM here, having left the hidden abode of the dead, and the gates of darkness, where Hades dwells apart from the gods,—I, Polydorus, who am the son of Hecuba, daughter of Cisseus, and of Priam my father, who, when the danger of falling before a Grecian spear encompassed the city of the Phrygians, in fear sent me forth secretly from the land of Troy, to the halls of Polymestor, a Thracian friend; he who cultivates the most fertile plain of Chersonese, ruling with the spear a people rejoicing in steeds: and with me my father secretly sends forth a great treasure of gold, so that, whenever the walls of Ilium should fall, there might be no lack of subsistence to the surviving children. But I was the youngest of the children of Priam, for which reason, also, he secretly sent me forth from the land; for I was unable either to bear armour or the sword in my boyish hand. So long, then, as the walls¹ of my country were standing, and the towers of the land of

¹ 16. *ὀρίσματα*, Mænia et turre recte intelligunt Scholiastæ. Sic Hippol. 1459. ὦ κλείν' Ἀθηνῶν Παλλάδος θ' ὀρίσματα.—MATTH.

Troy were not yet broken down, and my brother Hector was prosperous with the spear, I sprung up like some young branch, fairly nurtured in the house of the Thracian, my father's friend, wretch that I am! But when Troy and the life of Hector were lost, and my father's hearth was rooted up, and he himself had fallen before the god-built² altar,—slain by the blood-stained son of Achilles,—then my father's friend slays me, the wretched one, for the sake of the gold; and having slain me, cast me forth into the surge of the sea, that he might keep the gold to himself in his house. And I lie now on the shore, now on the swelling sea, borne to and fro by the frequent ebb and flow of the waves, unwept, unburied. But at this moment, having left my body, I glide forth on account of my dear mother Hecuba, being tossed about now for the third day, even so long as my ill-fated mother has been on this land of Chersonese from Troy. But all the Achæans, with their ships,³ are sitting quietly upon the shores of this Thracian land; for Achilles, son of Peleus, appearing over his tomb, has withheld the entire host of the Greeks from directing homeward the naval oar; and he claims to receive my sister Polyxena as a grateful victim at his tomb, and as a gift of honour. And this he will obtain, and will not be without this tribute from his friends; and fate leads my sister on to death this very day; so that our mother will behold the two corpses of two of her children, both mine and the ill-fated damsel's. For I will show myself before the feet

² 23. θεόδμητος, by Poseidon and Apollo; but, Hoc loco non a diis conditum, sed diis conditum sc. consecratum sig-

nificare animadvertit Schol.—DIND.

³ 35. Others, holding their ships, sc. at anchor.

of a slave on a wave of the sea, that I, wretched, may receive burial. For I have asked as a favour, of those who are mighty below, that I may meet with a tomb, and fall into the hands of my mother. Mine, then, shall be all, as much as I have desired to obtain; but I will retire out of the way of the aged Hecuba; for here she comes forth from [beyond P.] the tent of Agamemnon, terrified at my phantom. Alas! O my mother! thou who, after the halls of princes, hast beheld the day of slavery, how ill thou farest now, just as thou didst once fare well! But some god is ruining thee, counterbalancing⁴ your former happiness.

HECUBA.

Lead, O my children, the aged woman before the tents—lead me, ye Trojan damsels, raising up your [now P.] fellow-slave, but who was once your queen. Hold me—bear me—conduct me—support me, taking hold of my aged hand,—while I also, leaning upon the crooked staff, the staff of my arm, will hasten to advance the tardy movement of my limbs. O thou lightning of Jove! O pitchy Night! wherefore is it⁵ that thus, in the night season, I am startled by terrors, by phantoms? O revered Earth! mother of black-winged dreams, I discard the vision of night, the fearful vision concerning my son, who is preserved safe in Thrace, and concerning Polyxena, my beloved daughter, which I have learned, ⁶ I have been taught by dreams.

⁴ 58. See Liddell and Scott's Lexicon, ἀντισηκώω.

⁵ 69. τί ποτε must be infused into our language according to the sense; ποτε is equal to

Lat. *tandem, how ever, how in the world, why I pray.*

⁶ 76. δι' ὀνείρων εἶδον φοβερὰν, P. vision, which I have seen, &c.

O ye gods of this land,⁷ save my son, who, the only one that is left, and the anchor⁸ of my house, abides in snowy Thrace, in the guardianship of his father's friend. Some strange thing will happen; there will come a song of mourning for the mournful. My mind is never so unceasingly agitated with horror and alarm. Where, I pray, may I behold the inspired soul of Helen and Cassandra, ye Trojan damsels, that they may interpret me my dreams? For I beheld a dappled hind, gored by the blood-stained⁹ claws of a wolf, dragged by force from my knees, a piteous sight. This, likewise, is a dread to me; there appeared above the highest summit of his tomb the shade of Achilles, and he demanded, as a gift of honour, one of the much suffering Trojan women. From my child, then, from my child, ye deities, avert this omen, I supplicate you.

CHORUS.

Hecuba, in haste have I bent my way to thee, having left my master's tents, where I have been allotted and apportioned a slave; driven away from the city of Ilium, taken captive at the point of the spear by the Achæans, lightening none of thy sufferings, but bearing with me a heavy weight of tidings, and to thee, O lady, a herald of woe. For in full conclave of the Achæans, it is said, that it has been determined to offer thy daughter a victim to Achilles; and thou knowest when, rising over his tomb, he appeared in golden panoply, and stayed the ocean-traversing barks as they were staying their sails with the cables, uttering aloud

⁷ 79. *χθόνιοι*, Non inferi, sed ut recte unus Schol. explicat οἱ ἐγχώριοι, οἱ ἐντόπιοι.
—DIND.

⁸ 80. P. As it were the anchor.

⁹ 90. *αἵμωνι*. Hermann takes this word to mean "eager," from *αἵσσω*.

these words :—"Whither, then, ye Danai, speed ye, leaving my tomb without a gift of honour?" But waves of mighty contention clashed together, and divided sentiments were going throughout the warrior host of the Greeks; it seeming meet to some to offer a victim to the tomb, but to the others not so. And there was Agamemnon, zealously promoting thy good, constant to the bed of the inspired prophetess. But the two sons of Theseus,¹ scions of Athens, were speakers of different sentiments, yet they both acquiesced in this one opinion,—to crown the tomb of Achilles with a libation of fresh blood; and both affirmed, that they would never prefer the bed of Cassandra before the spear of Achilles. Now the earnestness with which the speeches were continued was perchance equal, until the crafty-minded, prating, honey-tongued speaker, the mob courtier, the son of Laërtes, persuades the host not to reject the most valiant of all the Danai, for the sake of the sacrifice of a slave; nor suffer any of the dead, standing near Persephone, to say, that the Danai had departed from the plains of Troy, ungrateful to those Danai who perished in behalf of the Greeks. And Ulysses is all but here, to drag thy young one from thy bosom, and to tear her away from thy aged hand. But go thou to the temples, go to the altars, sit a suppliant at the knees of Agamemnon, proclaim it to the gods, both those of heaven and those beneath the earth; for either thy prayers will prevent thee from being bereaved of thy wretched daughter, or thou must look upon the virgin hanging over the tomb, empurpled with blood, flowing in a darkly gleaming stream from her gold-encircled neck.

¹ 125. Acamas and Demophon.—SCH.

HECUBA.

Ah me, wretched! What shall I utter? What sound? What lamentation? Miserable from miserable old age, from slavery not to be endured, not to be borne! Woe is me! Who will succour me? What race, or what city? My aged husband is gone—my children are gone—which way shall I take, this way or that? or whither shall I advance?² Where is there any god or any deity who will aid me? O ye Trojan damsels, who have brought evil tidings, who have announced accursed woes, ye have slain me utterly, ye have slain me. No longer is life desirable to me in the light of day. O thou, my wretched foot, guide me, guide an aged woman to this tent! O my child, daughter of a most ill-fated mother, come forth, come forth from the house! Hear the voice of thy mother, my child, that thou mayest know what a report, what a report, I hear, affecting thy life.

POLYXENA.

O my mother, my mother, why criest thou aloud? Heralding what new tidings, hast thou startled me, in this consternation, from the tent, like a bird from its nest?

HEC. Woe is me, my child!

POL. Why utterest thou words of ill omen to me? Methinks the preface is evil.

HEC. Alas, for thy life!

POL. Speak out, conceal it not so long; I fear, I fear, my mother: why in the world groanest thou aloud?

HEC. O my child, child of a wretched mother!

² 164. An accusative is wanting after ἦσιν. Reiske's conjecture is probably right: ποῖ δ' ἦσιν πύδα;—DIND.

POL. What is this that thou announcest?

HEC. The public decision of the Argives joins in determining to sacrifice thee at the tomb in honour of the son³ of Peleus.

POL. Woe is me, my mother! What direful evils dost thou utter? Disclose them to me, disclose them, my mother.

HEC. I tell thee, my child, ill-omened rumours. They report that a decree hath passed by vote of the Argives concerning thy life.

POL. O thou who hast suffered dreadful treatment! O thou all wretched! O mother of ill-fated existence, what a wrong, what a wrong, most hateful and unspeakable, hath some deity again impelled against thee! No longer shall I, thy child,⁴ no longer now shall I, miserable, share slavery with thy miserable old age. For, as if I were some mountain-nurtured whelp, thou miserable shalt behold me, thy miserable offspring, torn from thy hand, and with severed throat sent down into the darkness that is beneath the earth, to Hades where I shall lie miserable among the dead. Thee, indeed, O my mother, ill-fated in thy life, I bewail with moaning of deep lamentation; but mine own life, a life of outrage and wrong, I bewail not: nay death, a better lot, hath befallen me.

CHORUS. But lo! Hecuba, hither comes Ulysses with hastened foot, to signify to thee some new command.

ULYSSES.

Lady, I deem, indeed, that thou knowest the judg-

³ 191. Πηλεΐδα, γέννα. P. O my daughter! Vera est altera interpretatio, Πηλεΐδα γέννα, id est Πηλέως γέννα, Achilli; patronymico, ut fit

interdum, pro nomine primitivo posito.—DIND.

⁴ 202. οὐκέτι σοι παῖς ἔδ'. P. I, thy child, live no longer.

ment of the army and the decree that has prevailed ; but, nevertheless, I will declare it. It has seemed good to the Achæans to offer thy daughter Polyxena, at the lofty mound of the tomb of Achilles. Moreover, they appoint me to guide and escort the damsel ; but the son of Achilles is fixed upon as the superintendent of this sacrifice, and officiating priest. Knowest thou then what to do?⁵ Neither be thou dragged away by violence, nor come to a trial of force with me ; but acknowledge my strength, and the presence of thy calamities. 'Tis wise, in sooth, to have right feelings even in misfortunes.

HEC. Alas ! a mighty struggle, as it seems, is at hand, full of groanings, and not void of tears. For I myself died not, when I should have died, and Jove destroyed me not ; but he preserves me, that I may look upon other woes greater than the old, wretched that I am. But if it be permitted to slaves to ask of the free, questions not grievous and not biting to the heart, it were good that thy speech should have been concluded,⁶ and that we who ask these questions should hear the replies.

UL. It is permitted, ask on ; for I grudge not the time.

HEC. Rememberest thou, when thou camest a spy against Ilium, both disfigured in unseemly raiment, and from thine eyes drops of gore⁷ trickled down thy cheek ?

225. Literally, Do, dost thou know what?—BENTL.

⁶ 236. σοὶ μὲν εἰρησθαι χρίων, A te peroratum esse oportet.—DIND.

⁷ 241. φόνου. Recte Jacobs. in Animadv. p. 4. cruorem intelligit quo Ulixes sædatus Trojam venerat secundum Hom. Od. iv. 244.—DIND.

UL. I do remember : for not on the surface only did it touch my heart.

HEC. And that Helen recognised thee, and divulged it to me alone ?

UL. I remember that I fell into great perils.

HEC. And that thou didst clasp my knees in abject humility ?

UL. Yea, so that my hand even grew dead in thy robes.

HEC. What, then, saidst thou, being at that time my slave ?

UL. Devices of many words, so that I might escape death.

HEC. Did I, then, save thee, and convey thee from the land ?

UL. Yea, so that I now look upon the light of to-day's sun.

HEC. Art thou not, then, acting basely in these thy counsels, thou who hast received at my hands such boons as thou confessest to have received, but yet doest to me no good, but evil to the utmost of thy power ? An ungrateful generation is thine, all of you who aspire to the honours of popular harangue. Would that ye were not known to me, ye who care not for harming your friends, if ye do but speak somewhat to gratify the many. But what is it they deem this cunning argument to be, that they have decreed sentence of death against this damsel ? Did destiny draw them on to slaughter human kind before the tomb, where it is more fitting to offer oxen ? Or is it wishing to inflict death, in retribution on his slayers, that Achilles with justice designs death to her ? But she, at least, has done him no wrong. He should have demanded [he should de-

mand P.] Helen as a sacrifice over his tomb; for 'twas she who destroyed him, and who led him against Troy. But if it be required that some chosen captive, and one excelling in beauty, should die, this belongs not to us: for the daughter of Tyndarus is the most beautiful in form, and has been found guilty of no less an injury than we. On the ground of justice, indeed, I contend for this argument; but as to what thou shouldst give in gratitude at my request, hear. Thou didst touch, as thou acknowledgest, my hand and my aged cheek, kneeling down before me: I, in turn, touch these same parts, and I ask back of thee the favour I then bestowed on you; and I implore thee, drag not away my child from mine arms—slay her not. There is enough of the dead. In her I rejoice and have oblivion of my woes; she is my consolation in the place of many things; she is my country, my nurse, my staff, the guide of my path. It becomes not them that have power to exercise that power in things they ought not, nor the prosperous to deem that they will ever⁸ prosper. For I too was once in that state, but now I am no longer; and one day robbed me of all my bliss. But by thy⁹ beard, reverence my supplication, compassionate me: and, going forth to the host of the Achæans, admonish them what a shame it is to be slaying women, whom at the first ye did not slay, dragging them from the altars, but had compassion on them. Now among you the same law concerning blood is laid down for the free and the slave alike. But thy rank, even if thine

⁸ 283. Πράττειν· πράζειν, P. quod revocandum.—DIND.

⁹ 286. Thy, φίλον; this sense is common in the poets,

especially Homer, when φίλος is joined to ἥτορ, χεῖρ, γούνα, etc.

argument fail, will persuade them: for the same words have not the same force when they proceed from the ignoble, as they have from the mouth of men of character.¹

CHORUS. There is no temper in mankind [What temper is there? P.] so harsh, as, when it hears the wailing of thy moanings and prolonged lamentations, not to let fall a tear.

UL. Hecuba, be instructed by me, and do not in thy wrath² [præ ira] reckon him who speaks for thy good hostile to thee in spirit. I am ready, indeed, to preserve thy person, through which I have been successful; and I say not otherwise. But what I declared before all I will not deny, that, when Troy should be taken, we should offer thy daughter a victim to the most valiant warrior of the host, at his demand; for in this most states are weak, when any citizen who is valiant and zealous bears off no higher rewards than those inferior to him. But at our hands Achilles is, worthy of honour, O Lady, being one who has fallen most nobly for the land of Hellas. Is not it then disgraceful, if we treat one as a friend while he lives, but when he has gone [has perished P.] treat him as such no longer? Well, then; what, I pray, will one say, if there should again appear a mustering of the host, and a contest against foes? Shall we fight, or shall we be fainthearted, when we see that the dead are not held in honour? Nay, indeed, for my own part living from day to day though I should possess but little, yet anything would suffice me; but I should wish

¹ 295. δοκούντων = ἐνδοξος, very rare: so ἔχων dives, βλέπων, l. 311. vivus.

² 299. τῷ θυμμένῳ id est. τῷ θυμῳ.—DIND.

for my tomb to be looked upon with reverence ; for that honour lasts for a long time. But if thou sayest that thou sufferest woes deserving pity, hear this in reply from me. There are among us aged women and old men, no whit less wretched than thou art, and brides deprived of most valiant bridegrooms, whose corpses the dust of Ida here conceals. Endure these things : but we, if we adopt the custom of not honouring the brave, shall incur the blame of folly. But you barbarians neither deem your friends as friends, nor revere those who have nobly fallen ; so that Greece indeed shall be prosperous, but ye shall receive a lot in accordance with your counsels.

CHORUS. Alas ! how evil a thing it is to be a slave, and to endure what one should not endure, overpowered by force.

HEC. O my daughter, my words indeed are vanished in the air, ejaculated in vain concerning thy death. But do thou, if thou hast any greater influence than thy mother, make every effort, pouring forth every sound, as it were the voice of a nightingale, that thou be not bereaved of life. And fall suppliantly before the knees of Ulysses here, and strive to persuade him ; for thou hast a reason for it ; for he too has children, so that he may sympathize in thy fate.

POL. I see thee, Ulysses, concealing thy right hand beneath thy robe, and turning thy face away, that I may not touch thy beard. Fear not : thou art safe from any appeal of mine to Jove the god of suppliants : for assuredly I will follow thee at all events, both because it is inevitable, and because I desire to die ; but if I shall not so wish, I shall show myself a base and a dastardly woman. For why should I live on ?

I who had for a father the king of all the Phrygians; this was the opening of my life. Then was I nurtured on fair hopes, a bride for kings, having no mean³ rivalry for my hand, to whose halls and hearths I should go. And I, the ill fated one, was mistress among the women of Ida, admired among virgins, equal to the gods [goddesses P.], save in death alone. But now I am a slave. In the first place, indeed, the very name makes me desire to die, being an unwonted one; and in the next, I might perchance meet with a master cruel in his temper, some one who would purchase me for silver,—me, who am the sister of both Hector and many other princes; and, putting upon me the task of grinding corn in his house, would compel me to sweep his halls, and to preside over the loom, passing my days in sorrow. And some purchased slave from anywhere would defile my bed, that was before deemed worthy of princes. No, in sooth, I will dismiss from my eyes this free light of heaven, presenting my body to Hades. Lead me, then, Ulysses, and kill me, leading me hence; for I see not any encouragement of hope or expectation near me, that it is possible for me ever to be happy. But thou, my mother, do not thou stand in my way in anything, neither by word nor by deed: but consent for me to die before I meet with ignominy that is unworthy of me. For whoever is not accustomed to taste of calamity, bears it indeed, but grieves, placing his neck under the yoke: but dying, he would be far more fortunate than living on: for to live dishonourably is a great bane.

CHORUS. A marvellous and well marked stamp is it

³ 352. Otherwise, "Con- on him to whose," etc.
ferring no unenviable marriage

among mortals to be born of goodly parentage, and the name of noble birth is exalted yet higher among such as are worthy of it.

HEC. Nobly indeed hast thou spoken, my child; yet to that which is noble is added pain. But if the son of Peleus must needs be gratified, and you must escape blame, Ulysses, slay not her indeed; but lead me to the funeral pyre of Achilles, stab me, spare not. 'Twas I brought forth Paris who slew the son of Thetis, striking him with the dart.

UL. Not thy death, O aged dame, did the shade of Achilles demand of the Achæans, but this damsel's.

HEC. Then slay me with my daughter, and there will be twice as great a draught of blood for the earth and for the dead who demands these offerings.

UL. The death of thy daughter is sufficient; one death must not be added to another. And would that we needed not this one!

HEC. It cannot, at least, be prevented that I die with my daughter.

UL. How so? For I know not that I have any masters.

HEC. As the ivy to the oak, how will I cling to her!

UL. Nay, not at least if thou wilt be advised by those who are wiser than thyself.

HEC. Be assured that of my own accord I will not let this damsel go.

UL. But neither will I, in sooth, go hence and leave her here.

POL. My mother, be prevailed upon by me; and thou, son of Laërtes, be indulgent to a parent who is naturally incensed. But do thou, O wretched mother,

contend not against the mighty. Dost thou wish to fall upon the ground, and to wound thy aged flesh, being pushed away by force, and to be treated in unseemly manner by being dragged along by a youthful arm? Which things thou wilt suffer: but do not thou at least act thus: for it is unworthy of thee. But, O my beloved mother, give me thy dear hand, and grant me to join cheek to cheek; for never again, but now for the last time of all, shall I look upon the beams and the orb of the sun. Thou art receiving now my last address. O my mother, O thou who brought me forth, I am now going to the realms below.

HEC. O my daughter—but I shall live a slave in the light of heaven.

POL. I go without nuptial rites, without the bridal song, things I ought to have obtained.

HEC. Pitiable art thou, my child, and I a wretched woman.

POL. And there in Hades shall I lie bereft of thee.

HEC. Woe is me! what shall I do? where close my life?

POL. I shall die a slave, though I am the child of a free father.

HEC. But I am bereft of at least fifty children.

POL. What shall I say for thee to Hector, or to thine aged husband?

HEC. Tell them, that I am the most wretched of all women.

POL. O ye breasts, and thou bosom which nourished me so sweetly!

HEC. O daughter of an untimely, a miserable fate!
[wretched by reason of, &c., P.]

POL. Farewell, my mother, and farewell too Cassandra, for me [my Cassandra P.].

HEC. Others, farewell; but this is not for thy mother.

POL. And my brother Polydorus, who is among the Thracians rejoicing in steeds.

HEC. Aye, if he lives. But I distrust it; so ill-fated am I in everything.

POL. He doth live; and will close thine eyes when thou art dead.

HEC. I for my part am dead through misery, before the time of death.

POL. Convey me hence, Ulysses, having enveloped my head in a robe; for, indeed, before I am sacrificed, I have waxed faint at heart from the laments of my mother, and I waste her away in wailings. O thou light of heaven, for thy name I may yet address thee by, but I have no part in thee, save for so long as I am passing hence to the sword and the pyre of Achilles.

HEC. Ah me! I faint—and my limbs are failing! O my daughter, touch thy mother, stretch forth thy hand, give it me,—leave me not childless—I am lost, my friends.⁴ Ah that I might behold the Laconian Helen, the sister of the twin sons of Jove! for through the beauty of her eyes most shamefully hath she taken happy Troy.

CHORUS. Breeze, breeze of the sea, thou who conveyst the swift ocean-traversing barks over the surge

⁴ 441-3. These lines are wholly improper for the mouth of Hecuba, who ought to have fainted at l. 440. Hermann

thinks they belong to the Chorus. Dindorf considers them spurious.

of the sea, whither wilt thou carry me, the wretched one? Possessed in slavery, to whose house shall I arrive? Will it be to some harbour of the Dorian land, or of the land of Pthia, where they say that Apidanus, father of fairest waters, fertilizes the plains? or to that island⁵ (miserable that I am, conveyed by the ocean-sweeping oar, enduring a pitiable existence in its abodes,) to that island where the first-born palm and the laurel put forth their sacred branches over beloved Latona,⁶ the adornment of those pangs of which Jove was the cause? And with the Delian damsels shall I extol the golden fillet and the bow of Artemis their goddess? Or in the city of Pallas, on the saffron veil of Athena of the beautiful chariot,⁷ shall I yoke the steeds to the car, embroidering it on curiously wrought webs, worked in light colours, or [shall I depict] the brood of Titans whom Jove the son of Cronus lays to rest with flaming lightning? Woe is me for my children, woe is me for my parents, and for my native land, which is cast down in ruin, blackening with smoke, captured with the spear by the Argives; but I in a foreign land henceforth bear the name of a slave, having left Asia the handmaid of Europe,⁸ exchanging that name only for the chambers of Hades.

⁵ 455. The construction is ἡ πορεύσεις με ἔνθα νήσων, i. e. εἰς τῶν νήσων ἐκείνην ἔνθα κ.τ.λ.—MATTH. Otherwise it may be construed, ἡ πρὸς ὄρμον νήσων, to the harbour of some island—that island where, etc.—BOISSON.

⁶ 461. Δίας vel δίας est "Jovialis."—DIND.

⁷ 467. Porson has the Ionic

form, καλλιδιφροῖ: this is in order to avoid the hiatus. Dindorf would read καλλιδιφροῦς, gen. from καλλιδιφρῆς, an unknown adjective.

⁸ 483. The construction is, ἀλλαξάσα (τοῦ δόνη κεκλησθαι) "Αἶδα θαλάμους of Soph. Ant. 944. Pflugk.—Otherwise: "Exchanging the bridal chambers for the grave."

TALTHYBIUS.

Where shall I find her who was once the queen of Ilium, Hecuba, ye Trojan damsels?

CII. Here she lies near thee, Talthybius, on her back upon the ground, enveloped in robes.

TALTH. O Jove, what shall I say? that thou regardest mortals? or else that men have merely adopted this false notion to no purpose, holding that a race of deities exists, but that fortune controls all the affairs of mortals? Was not this the queen of the Phrygians, abounding in gold? Was she not the wife of Priam, who was so highly prosperous? And now her country, indeed, is all subverted with the spear, and she herself a slave, an old woman, childless, grovels upon the earth, defiling her ill-fated head in the dust. Alas! alas! I truly am old; but, nevertheless, may death be my lot, before I am involved in an ignominious fate of this kind. Stand up, thou unhappy one, and raise thy side, and thy hoary head from the ground.

HEC. Well—who art thou, that wilt not suffer my body to lie in peace? Why rousest thou me, whoever thou art, in my sorrow?

TALTH. I am Talthybius who am come, a servant of the house of Danaus, Agamemnon having sent me for thee, O Lady.

HEC. O thou fondest of men, can it be thou who hast come, because it seemeth good to the Achæans to slay me also over the tomb? for thou wouldst then bring welcome tidings. Let us hasten, let us be quick, lead me on, old man.

TALTH. I am come to fetch thee that thou mayest bury thy daughter who is dead, O Lady: and the two sons of Atreus, and the host of the Achæans sent me.

HEC. Ah me ! what wilt thou say ? art thou come then for me, not that I may die, but to announce evil tidings ? Thou hast perished, O my child, torn away from my mother ; and I am childless as to thee. O wretch that I am ! and how did ye make away with her ? Was it with feelings of respect ? or did ye make her fate terrible, slaying her as a foe, old man ? Speak on, although thou wilt relate no welcome words.

TALTH. Thou wishest me, O lady, to shed reiterated tears, in compassion for thy daughter ; for both now, in telling the woeful tale I shall bedew my eyes with tears, and I did so at the tomb also, when she perished. There was present indeed the whole multitude of the host of the Achæans in full assembly before the tomb, awaiting the sacrifice of thy daughter : and the son of Achilles having taken Polyxena by the hand set her upon the summit of the mound, and I stood near : and chosen selected youths of the Achæans followed, to control the boundings of thy young one with their hands. The son of Achilles, having taken in both hands a full goblet of solid gold, with one of them poured forth libations to his departed sire : and he gives me the signal to proclaim silence to the whole host of the Achæans. And I standing by his side uttered these words in the midst of them.—“ Be silent, ye Achæans ; let all the host be silent ! Be still, keep silence ! ” Then I caused the multitude to stand still. And he said, “ O son of Peleus, and my father, receive at my hand these appeasing libations that evoke⁹ the dead ; and come forth, that thou mayest drink the pure dark blood of a virgin, which we offer unto thee, both the host and I myself.

⁹ 536. ἀγῶγους — others, that conduct or speed on their way.

But become thou propitious to us, and grant us to set loose the sterns and the mooring cables of our ships, and that, having met with an auspicious voyage home from Ilium, we may all arrive at our native land." So much he spake, and all the host offered up prayer. Then taking his gilded sword by the handle, he drew it forth from the sheath, and signed to the chosen youths of the Argive host to lay hold on the maiden. But when she was given to understand¹ it, she gave utterance to these words.—"O ye Argives, who have sacked my native city, I am willing to die: let no one touch my person, for I will offer my neck to the knife with a good courage. But first, I entreat by the gods, having let me go free, that I may die a free woman, then slay me: for I should be ashamed to be called a slave among the dead, when I am a princess." Then the people shouted applause, and king Agamemnon ordered the young men to let the maiden go. [And as soon as they heard these last words from him in whom resided the supreme power, they let her go.] Then when she heard this command from her lord, she took hold of and rent off her garment from the top of the shoulder to the middle of her loins, by the navel, and showed her bosom and her chest, as of a statue, most beautiful: and bending her knee to the ground, she uttered the boldest speech of all. "Lo here, O youth, if indeed thou art desirous to strike my breast, strike on: or if thou wouldst rather strike under the neck, here is my throat ready for you." But he, not willing and yet willing, in pity for the damsel, divides with a sword the channels of her breath; and streams of blood gushed

¹ ὥς ἐφράσθη· συνῆκεν, ἔγνω, ἐνόησεν. HESYCH.

forth. But she, even in death, nevertheless was careful to fall in seemly sort, concealing what women ought to conceal from the eyes of men. But when she had breathed her last from the fatal blow, not one of the Achæans was busied in the same task; but some of them were casting leaves from their hands over the dead maiden, and others heap up the funeral pyre, bearing logs of fir; and he who would bring nothing, heard revilings such as these from him who was carrying them: "Standest thou still, O vilest of men, having for the damsel no robe and no ornament in thy hands? are you not going to offer somewhat to her of exceeding nobleness of heart, valiant in soul?" Such things I tell thee concerning thy daughter who is no more: but thee I look upon of all women the most blessed in thy children and yet the most hapless.

CHOR. A fearful tempest of woe hath boiled up against the house of Priam, and against my country. This is the fate ordained by heaven.

HEC. O my daughter, I know not upon which of my miseries I shall direct my view, when so many are present! For if I lay-hold on any, that one does not suffer me; and from another quarter some other grief calls me away, recruiting woe with woe. And now, indeed, I cannot blot out thy fate from my mind without groaning over it, but this, again, thou has greatly lessened, in having been reported to me to have shown a noble spirit. Is it not strange, if a sterile soil, receiving from the gods seasonable weather, bears a goodly corn harvest, but a fertile soil, on the other hand, failing of what it ought to have received, puts forth a bad crop? while among men, the base born is never anything else but base; but the noble is ever noble, nor

under the influence of calamity does he corrupt his natural disposition, but is ever excellent. Is parentage or education the point of difference? Certainly, however, to have been well nurtured carries with it the teaching of what is good; but if one have fully learned this, he assuredly knows what is vicious, having learned it by the rule of virtue: and these matters my mind hath been striving after in vain. But go then, and signify this from me to the Argives; that it is my request that no one touch the damsel, but that they keep the crowd aloof. In sooth in an immense army an undisciplined multitude and the seamen's unchecked license is more furious than fire; and base is he accounted who doeth not some base act. But do thou again take a vessel, my old attendant, and having immersed it in the salt sea, bring it hither, that in her last lavations I may wash my child and lay her out, my child, a hapless bride,² and an ill-fated virgin—as indeed she deserves, how can I? I have not the power; but with what means I have, I will: for what can I do?³ but having collected ornaments from among the captive women who dwell about me within these tents, if any of them, without the knowledge of her new lord, possesses anything saved by stealth from her own home, [I will adorn her with them]. O ye abodes, ye halls once fortunate! O Priam, with thy manifold and glorious possessions,⁴ most blessed in children, and my-

² 612. Literally, as above, a bride that is no bride; so, ἀπαρθενον, a virgin that is no virgin.

³ 614. On the formula τί πάθω; see Liddell and Scott's Dictionary πάσχω, l. 2.

⁴ 620. The translation above is according to the punctuation in the text; but "Delendum comma post τ' positum: cohærent enim κάλλιπτατ' εὐτεκνώτατε."—DIND. So P., "And most blest in fairest children."

self, the aged mother of thy progeny, how have we fallen, stripped of our former dignity ! Then, indeed, were we puffed up with arrogance, some of us dwelling in wealthy palaces, and others being held in honour by the citizens. But these things are nothing ; in vain are the counsels of deep thought and the boastings of the tongue. Most blessed is he to whom, day by day, there happens no calamity.

CHORUS. On me it was fated that calamity, on me it was fated that suffering should fall, when Alexander first hewed him down the pine wood of Ida, soon to steer his bark over the salt wave to the bed of Helen, the fairest dame on whom the sun shines with golden beam : for woes and compulsion mightier than woes revolve their course ; and from one man's folly a universal curse of destruction hath come upon the land of Simoïs, and calamity at the hands of strangers. And the rivalry which the shepherd youth decided on Ida concerning the three daughters of blessed gods, was decided entailing (*i. e.* with the consequence of, *ἐπί*,) war and bloodshed and insult on my house. And Lacedæmonian maidens on the banks of fair flowing Eurotas groan, as they shed many a tear in their homes, and mothers of children who have fallen are directing their hands against the hoary head, and tearing the cheek, pressing in the bloodstained nail to lacerate it.

FEMALE ATTENDANT.

Ye women, where ever is Hecuba, the utterly wretched, she who surpasses every man and the race of woman in misery ? No one will bear away the crown from her.

CHORUS. What is this, O thou wretched in thine ill-omenced cry ? for thy grievous tidings never rest.

ATT. I bear this grief for Hecuba. But in woe it is not easy for mortals to speak words of good omen.

CHORUS. And see, she chances to be passing out from beneath the tent, and appears in good season for thy tidings.

ATT. O my mistress, wholly wretched, yea, even more than I express, thou art undone—thou no longer beholdest the light of heaven—childless, widowed, homeless, utterly ruined.

HEC. Thou hast told me no new tale, but hast reproached those who know it. But wherefore hast thou come, bringing hither this corpse of my Polyxena, whose burial was announced to me as being actively advanced by the hands of all the Achæans?

ATT. She knows nothing, but is making lamentation to me for Polyxena, and touches not on her recent woes!

HEC. Woe is me, wretched! it cannot be that thou bringest hither the prophetic and inspired Cassandra?

ATT. Thou hast spoken of the living, but groanest not for this one who is dead. But inspect the person of this corpse, stripped of its coverings, and see whether it will appear a prodigy to thee and contrary to thy hopes.

HEC. Woe is me, I behold my son Polydorus dead, whom the Thracian had to preserve for me in his halls. I am utterly ruined, miserable one, and I now no longer exist. O my child, my child, alas, alas! I begin the frenzied strain, having but now learned my miseries of an avenging deity!

ATT. What! hast thou recognised the outrage of thy son, O thou ill-fated one?

HEC. Incredible, incredible, strange, strange are the

things I behold ! One misery after another befalls me ! Never a day will ⁵ come upon me free from groanings, free from tears.

CHORUS. Fearful, O thou wretched one, fearful are the woes we suffer !

HEC. O my child, child of a wretched mother, by what death didst thou die, by what mishap art thou lying here ? by the hand of what man ?

ATT. I know not : I chanced upon him on the strand by the sea.

HEC. Cast ⁶ out on the smooth sand, or fallen a victim by the bloodstained spear ?

ATT. The ocean wave of the sea cast him forth.

HEC. Woe is me ! Alas, I have discovered the dream, the vision of mine eyes ; the darkwinged ⁷ phantom hath escaped me not, the vision which I saw concerning thee, my child, that thou wast no longer living in the light of heaven !

CHORUS. Who then slew him ? canst thou who art versed in dreams ⁹ tell us ?

HEC. 'Twas my friend, my guest friend, the Thracian horseman, to whom his father secretly consigned him ?

CHORUS. Woe is me ! what wilt thou say ? that by slaying him he may keep the ⁸ treasure ?

HEC. Things unspeakable, that cannot be described,

⁵ 690. ἀμέρα ἐπισχῆσει ἀμέρα μ' ἐπισχ. P. ; οὐδέποτε παύσει με ὥστε μὴ δακρύειν MATTH.—i. e., Never will any day see me cease from groanings and tears.

⁶ 698. ΕΚ. ἐκβλητον ἢ πείσημα φοινίου δορός ; ΘΕΡ. ἐν ψαμάθῳ λευρᾷ πόντον κ.τ.λ. P.—i. e., HEC. Cast up

by the sea, or fallen, etc. ?—ATT. On the smooth sand of the sea an ocean wave cast him forth.

⁷ 704. φάσμα. P.

⁸ 709. δνειρόφρον. P. O thou who art skilled in dreams.

⁹ 712. ἔχοι. P. "might keep."

exceeding prodigies, unholy, not to be endured! where is the sacred obligation of hospitality? O thou accursed among men, how hast thou cut his flesh in pieces, cleaving with iron blade the limbs of this my child, and hast not pitied him.

CHORUS. O hapless one, assuredly some god hath rendered thee the most woeful of mortals, whoever he is that presses hard upon thee. But henceforth let us be silent, my friends, for I see advancing hither the person of our lord Agamemnon.

AGAMEMNON.

Hecuba, why delayest thou to come, and hide thy daughter beneath the tomb, on the same terms that Talthybius announced to me,—that none of the Argives should touch thy child? We therefore let her be, and do not lay hands on her; but thou art loitering, so that I marvel at it. But I have come to send thee on that service: for matters there have been well performed, if aught of these deeds may be termed *well*. Ha! what dead man of the Trojans in this, whom I see before the tents? for that he is not one of the Argives, the garments that enwrap his form announce to me.

HEC. [*Aside.*] Thou wretched one!—for I mean myself, when I say *thou*. O Hecuba, what shall I do? shall I fall before the knees of this Agamemnon, or bear my ills in silence?

AG. Wherefore, turning thy back upon my face wailest thou, and tellest me not what has been done? who this man is?

HEC. [*Aside.*] But if, deeming me a slave and an enemy, he should thrust me from his knees, I should but add to my grief.

AG. In sooth I am no prophet so as to find out the way of thy counsels, without hearing them.

HEC. [*Aside.*] Do I not calculate too much on the hostility of this man's disposition, when he is not hostile to me?

AG. If, indeed, thou desirest me to know nothing about these matters, thou hast come to the same point as myself; for neither do I desire to hear.

HEC. [*Aside.*] I cannot without this man's help avenge my children. Why do I revolve these thoughts? I must take courage, whether I succeed or not. Agamemnon, I supplicate thee by these thy knees, and by thy beard and thy blest right hand.

AG. Craving what boon? 'Tis not to pass thy life in freedom? for that were easy for thee to obtain.

HEC. No, indeed; but if I may avenge me on the base, I am willing to be a slave all my life long.

AG. And to succour thee in what, dost thou call upon me?

HEC. In none of those matters which thou conjecturest, O king. See'st thou this corpse, over which I let fall my tears?

AG. I see it: the sequel, however, I cannot perceive.

HEC. Him once I brought forth, and bore in my womb.

AG. And is this one of thy children, O wretched one?

HEC. Not one of the sons of Priam who fell under the walls of Troy.

AG. What, didst thou bring forth any other besides them, O lady?

HEC. Little to my profit, as it seems, this one whom thou lookest on.

AG. But where did he happen to be when the city fell?

HEC. His father sent him away fearing lest he should die.

AG. To what spot, having separated him alone from the rest of his children?

HEC. To this land, even where he was found dead.

AG. To the man who rules over this country, Poly-mestor?

HEC. Hither was he sent, the guardian of treasure most woeful to him.

AG. But by whose hand did he die, and with what fate met he?

HEC. By the hands of whom else? His friend the Thracian slew him.

AG. What a wretch! he longed, as I suppose, to get possession of the gold?

HEC. Even so, after he had learned the fate of the Phrygians.

AG. But where didst thou find him, or who brought the corpse hither?

HEC. This woman, who found it on the sea shore.

AG. Was she seeking for it, or engaged in some other occupation?

HEC. She had gone to fetch water from the sea to wash the body of Polyxena.

AG. His host, as it appears, having slain him cast him forth.

HEC. Yea, tossed by the waves, having thus severed his body in twain.

AG. O thou much suffering one, from thine immeasurable woes!

HEC. I am undone, and there is no evil yet left me, O Agamemnon!

AG. Alas, alas! what woman so unfortunate was ever born.

HEC. There is none such, save only if thou shouldst name misfortune herself. But the causes for which I fall before thy knees, hear them. If, on the one hand, I appear to thee to suffer what is right, I will be content; but if the contrary, do thou become my avenger on this man, a most impious host, he who fearing neither the gods below nor those above the earth hath perpetrated a most unholy deed: he who often having shared with me the same table, [and, in the list of friendship, holding the first¹ place among my friends; and having received all that was his due and taken precaution²] has murdered my son, and, though he chose to murder him, deemed him not worthy of a tomb, but cast him forth into the sea. I am both a slave, and perchance powerless: but the gods are mighty, and the law which governs them: for by the law we believe that there are gods, and we live under well defined distinctions of right and wrong. And if that law, when referred to thee, shall be corrupted, and they shall not suffer punishment who murder their guests or dare to bear off things sacred to the gods, there is no longer any equity in the affairs of mortals. Holding these things, then, in a disgraceful point of view, have respect for my calamities, compassionate me; and, like a painter standing at a distance, look on me and narrowly observe what evils I am enduring. I was once a queen, but am now thy slave: I was once happy in my children, but am now an old woman, and at once

¹ 794. *πρῶτος ὤν.* P.— or, having experienced respect
“being the chief.” from me.

² 795. *λαβὼν προμηθίαν,*

childless, homeless, desolate, the most wretched of mortals. Woe is me, miserable! whither dost thou stealthily withdraw thy foot from me?³ Methinks I shall fail of my suit, miserable that I am! Why then do we mortals toil after and search into all other sciences, as is right, but Persuasion, the sole queen among men, strive not to learn any more earnestly than the rest, by paying a price? in which case it would be possible sometimes to persuade men to what one desired and at the same time to obtain one's wish. How then henceforth can any one hope to be prosperous? My children indeed, though they were so many, no longer live for me, and I myself a captive in ignominy am going hence, while I see the smoke there leaping up from above my city. And yet, perchance this part of my speech is vain, the putting forward love as a plea: but nevertheless it shall be spoken. By thy side sleeps my daughter, the prophetess, whom Phrygians name Cassandra. Where then wilt thou show those nights of love, O king? or for her sweet caresses in thy bed, shall my child have any favour at thy hands, and I for her sake? [For 'tis from darkness, and the love-charms of night that by far the highest gratification is created among mortals.] Hear me then [now P.]: see'st thou this dead body? By doing well towards him, thou wilt do well to one allied to thee. My speech lacks one thing yet. O that I had a voice in my arms and hands and hair and footsteps, by the art of Dæ-

³ 812. ποῦ μ' ὑπεξάγεις πόδα; "Sensus esse videtur; Quo meum pedem subducis, i. e., quo me cogis te sequi?"—P. But the translation in the text is given by Pflugk, and

approved by Dindorf. The old grammarians would understand κατὰ at πόδα; but it seems to us more applicable to μ'.

dalus or of some one of the gods, that one and all might cling to thy knees, wailing, urging upon thee every form of language! O my lord, O thou greatest light of the Greeks, grant my request; stretch forth thine avenging hand over this old woman, even though she is nothing, yet stretch it forth. For 'tis the part of a noble man to be the minister of justice, and always in every place to punish the wicked.

CHOR. Strange it is, how all things befall mortals, and how the laws have determined the bounds of necessity, both rendering those friends who were most at enmity, and considering those who were before in friendship as foes.

AG. For thee and thy son and thy misfortunes, Hecuba, and for thy hand stretched forth in supplication, I have compassion; and I am desirous both for the sake of the gods and for the sake of justice, that the impious host should pay thee this penalty, if by any means it might appear both that thou shouldst be satisfied, and I might not seem to the army to have plotted, for the sake of Cassandra, this murder against the king of Thrace. For here it is where⁴ confusion has come upon me. This man the army considers as friendly to them, but him who is dead as their foe; and even if this man is friendly to thee, this is a separate matter and not participated in by the army. Wherefore take thought: for thou hast me ready indeed to cooperate with thee and swift to assist thee, but backward, if I shall be suspected among the Achæans.

HEC. Alas! there is no one of mortals who is free. For either he is the slave of wealth or fortune; or the

⁴ 857. Or *ἔστιν ἤ*, Anglice, *some how or other*.

majority of his countrymen or prescribed laws oblige him to adopt manners not in accordance with his feelings. But since thou art alarmed and considerest the multitude overmuch, I will set thee free from this cause of dread. For be thou indeed privy to it, whatever mischief I devise against him who slew this my son, but join not with me in the performance. But if any tumult or assistance should show itself on the part of the Achæans, while the Thracian is suffering what he shall suffer, do thou restrain them, not seeming to do so for my sake; and as to the rest, fear not: I will make all well.

AG. How so, then? what wilt thou do? wilt thou take a sword in thine aged hand and slay the barbarian wight, or wilt thou do it with poison, or by the aid of what means? What hand will be with thee? whence wilt thou get thee friends?

HEC. These tents envelope a multitude of Trojan women.

AG. The captives thou meanest, the spoil of the Greeks?

HEC. With the aid of these I will avenge me on my murderer.

AG. And how shall women possess the strength of men?

HEC. Their numbers are formidable, and, with craft, hard to contend against.

AG. Formidable indeed. The female sex, however, I hold in little esteem.

HEC. Why so? were they not women who slew the sons of Ægyptus, and unpeopled Lemnos utterly of males? But thus let it be; let this argument, indeed, pass: do thou have this woman escorted safely through

the host. And do thou, drawing near to the Thracian stranger, say, "She who was once the queen of Ilium, Hecuba, sends for thee, for thine own advantage no less than hers thee and thy children; for it is necessary that thy children also have knowledge of the words she will speak." And do thou, Agamemnon, put off the burial of the newly slain Polyxena, that these two, brother and sister, the divided care of their mother, may side by side with one funeral fire be hidden beneath the earth.

AG. So shall it be. For even if it were possible for the armament to sail, I could not have refrained from granting thee this boon; but as it is, since the Gods send not favourable gales, we must remain perforce, looking for a quiet voyage. But, in some way or other, may it turn out well: for this is the common interest of all, both privately to the individual, and to the state likewise, that the evil man on the one hand should suffer some evil, but that the good should prosper.

CHORUS. Thou indeed, O my native land of Ilium, shalt no longer be called a city of those that are unravaged: such a cloud of Greeks now envelopes thee round about, having laid thee waste with the spear, with the spear. And thou hast been shorn of thy coronet of towers, and hast been defiled with a most piteous pollution of thick smoke, wretched that thou art; no longer shall I tread thy streets. 'Twas in the depth of night I perished, when after feasting, sweet sleep is spread over the eyes, and when from songs and sacrifices causing the dance my husband resting⁵ lay calmly in his bed chamber, and his dart hung upon the nail; not

⁵ 917. *καταπαύσας*. The signification is anomalous. use of the act. in an intransitive

now expecting a naval host would mount the walls of Ilium. But I was arranging my braids with the bands that tied up my hair, looking into the golden mirror's countless rays, that I might go to my couch.⁶ But there came a din throughout the city; and this was the cry of exhortation through the citadel of Troy. "Sons of the Greeks, when then, when, having laid waste the watchtower or Ilium will ye return home?" But having quitted my dear bed, in a single robe like some Doric maiden, sitting a suppliant before revered Artemis yet I profited nothing, wretch that I am! But after beholding my husband slain, I am borne away over the ocean surge; and looking back upon my city, now that the ship had commenced its homeward voyage, and separated me from the land of Ilium, wretch that I am, I sink under my grief; devoting to curses Helen the sister of the twin sons of Jove, and the Idæan shepherd Paris the author of ill; since marriage, which was no marriage, but some woe wrought by an avenging fiend, hath utterly destroyed me, and hath banished me from my home. But never may the ocean wave conduct her back again, never may she arrive at the house of her fathers!

POLYMESTOR.

O Priam, fondest of men, and thou, Hecuba, best-beloved, I shed tears when I behold both thy city, and thy daughter who has so lately fallen. Alas! there is nothing on which we may rely, no assurance that the man who is prosperous will not meet with calamity;

⁶ 927. ἐπιδύμνιος, "lege ἐπιδύμνιον, et verte, torum vestibus stratum." P. But a similar tautology occurs, Bacch. 11,

χαμαιπέτης πίπτει πρὸς οὐδᾶς.
DIND. Liddell and Scott seem to favour Porson's reading.

but the Gods mingle them up together to and fro, bringing in confusion, that in our ignorance we may worship them. But why need I utter these complaints, not advancing to the evils before us? But if thou findest any fault because of my absence, forbear: for I chanced to be away in the heart of Thrace when thou camest hither: but when I came home, straightway as I was setting my foot out of my palace, this thine attendant falls in with me, bearing thy message, on hearing which I have come to thee.

HEC. I blush to look thee in the face Polymestor, being plunged in such calamities. For with one by whom I have been seen in my prosperity, shame haunts me at being in this plight, in which I now am, and I could not look upon thee with unaverted eyes. But deem not this illwill towards thee, Polymestor; for custom else is in some degree my excuse, that women should not stare men in the face.

POLYM. Aye, and 'tis no wonder. But what need hast thou of me? on what errand hast thou summoned my foot forth from my home?

HEC. I wish to communicate a certain secret of my own to thee and to thy children. But bid thine attendants stand apart from these tents.

POLYM. Begone: for this lonely spot is safe. Thou indeed art a friend, and this army of Achæans is friendly towards me: but thou must signify to me what assistance he who is prosperous must afford to his friends who are in adversity; as I for my part am ready.

HEC. First tell me of my son Polydorus, whom being received from my hands and from his father's, thou hast in thy palace,—is he yet alive? and the rest I will ask thee in the second place.

POLYM. Assuredly he is; so far as he is concerned, thou art fortunate.

HEC. O most fond one, how well thou speakest, and how worthily of thyself!

POLYM. What then is the second thing thou desirest to learn of me?

HEC. Whether he still has any recollection of me his mother?

POLYM. Aye; he even sought to come hither to thee secretly.

HEC. And is the gold safe which he had when he went from Troy?

POLYM. It is safe—at least it is guarded in my palace.

HEC. Preserve it then, and covet not thy neighbour's goods.

POLYM. By no means. May I be content with what I have, O lady.

HEC. Know'st thou then what I wish to say to thee and thy children?

POLYM. I know not; thou must signify this in thine own words.

HEC. May he (*i. e.* my son) be loved,⁷ even as now thou art beloved by me.

POLYM. What matter is it, which I and my children are to know?

HEC. The ancient caverns that hide the treasures of the house of Priam.

POLYM. Is it this that thou desirest me to communicate to thy son?

⁷ 1000. *ἔστω φιληθείς*, scribendum cum Hermannō *ἔστ'*, *ὦ φιληθείς κ.τ.λ.* DIND. (*i. e.*,

It is, O thou beloved, as now thou art, etc.)

HEC. Most assuredly, and at any rate through thee; for thou art a pious man.

POLYM. What need then of the presence of these children.

HEC. 'Twere better, if thou die, that these should know it.

POLYM. Thou hast spoken well in this matter, and more wisely than myself.

HEC. Know'st thou then where the temple of Ilian Minerva stands?

POLYM. Is the gold there? But what is the token?

HEC. A black stone rising above the ground.

POLYM. Dost thou desire to signify anything further to me, of what is there?

HEC. I wish thee only to preserve the treasures with which I came forth from the city.

POLYM. Pray, where are they? Hast thou them in concealment under thy robes?

HEC. They are preserved within these tents, among a heap of spoils.

POLYM. Where sayest thou? These are the naval fences of the Achæans.

HEC. The apartments of the captive females are private.

POLYM. But is all right within, and free from the presence of males?

HEC. There are none of the Achæans within, but we women only. But go thou within the tents; for the Argives are anxious to loosen the cables that detain their ships, in homeward course from Troy: so that, having effected all that is requisite for thee to do, thou mayest return with thy children thither where thou hast planted my son.

CHORUS. Not yet hast thou suffered, yet perchance thou wilt suffer retribution, as one falling athwart into the sea which offers no place of safety is deprived⁸ of his loved soul, losing his life.⁹ For where¹ it occurs to the same person to be obnoxious to human justice and divine vengeance, deadly, deadly is the evil. Thine expectation concerning this errand will deceive thee, the expectation which hath led thee on to deathbearing Hades, O thou wretched one! and by a hand unused to war thou shalt quit thy life.

POLYM. O me! I am deprived of the light of mine eyes, wretch that I am.

CHORUS. Heard ye the wail of the Thracian, my friends?

POLYM. Alas! again alas! my children, what dreadful slaughter!

CHORUS. My friends, strange deeds of woe have been perpetrated within the tents.

POLYM. But never shall ye escape me with your nimble foot; for with blows I will break open the recesses of these abodes.

CHORUS. Hark, the blow of his heavy hand is urged impetuously! will ye that we rush in? for the crisis calls upon us to be present as a succour to Hecuba and the Trojan dames.

HECUBA.

Strike on, spare not at all, breaking open the gates:

⁸ 1026. ἐκπίεσθ, e consuetudine Homérica dictum est. Vid. Matth. Gr. Gram., § 521, not. 3. But Dindorf prefers ἐκπεσεῖ = ἐκπεσεῖ, which is to be referred to Polymestor—*i. e.*, *shalt thou be deprived of*, etc.

⁹ 1027. ἀμείρσας, or, (after the translation which Dindorf prefers, TRANSL.) having de-

prived another (sc. Polydorus) of his life.—SCHOLEF.

¹ 1030. οὐ. P. "Scribendum οὐ [sense of ὅπου, Musgrave] commate post ξυμπιτνει posito." DIND. On this authority, οὐ being unintelligible, οὐ has been adopted in the translation.

for never shalt thou set the bright organ of sight in thine eyeballs, nor ever behold alive, thy children whom I have slain.

CHORUS. Hast thou really then destroyed the Thracian, and gained the mastery over the stranger, my mistress? and hast thou achieved such deeds as thou sayest?

HEC. Thou wilt behold him straightway before the tents, blind, advancing with dark staggering step; and the bodies of his two children, whom I have slain, with the aid of the bravest of the Trojan dames: and he has paid me the penalty. But hither he comes, as thou seest, forth from the tents. But I will begone from his path, and retire from before the boiling wrath of this Thracian most fierce in conflict.

POLYMESTOR.

Woe is me! where can I set my foot, where stand? where shall I go, moving with the step of a fourfooted beast of the mountains on my hands along their footprint? what way shall I turn, this or that, longing to clutch the murderous women of Ilium, who have utterly destroyed me? O ye wretches, ye wretches, daughters of Phrygians, O ye accursed ones! Into what lurking places do they crouch from me in flight? Oh that thou wouldst heal, O sun, wouldst heal my gory orb of vision, ridding me of this dreary blindness². Ah! Ah!—Hist, Hist! I hear the hidden step of women! How might I springing forth glut myself on their flesh and bones, making the meal of savage beasts, earning myself shame, a recompense for the outrage I have suffered? O wretch that I am! whither,

² 1068. τυφλὸν φέγγος. cf. Med. 993. ὀλέθριον βιοτάν.

how am I borne along, leaving my children deserted for these bacchanals of hell to rend in pieces, and as a savage prey slain for hounds to devour, and to be cast out on the wild mountains? Where can I stand, where set my foot, where shall I rest?³ I who, like a bark furling its linen woven sail with sea dipt cables have rushed, the guardian of my children, into this lair of death?

CHORUS. O wretched one, what intolerable woes have been inflicted upon thee! But for him who hath done shameful deeds the God hath decreed fearful retribution, whoever it is that oppresses thee.

POLYM. Woe, woe! Hither, ye tribes of Thrace, wielding the spear, equipped⁴ in arms, riders of gallant steeds, servants of Mars! Help, ye Achæans! Help, ye sons of Atreus! For succour, succour, I cry aloud, for succour! Oh hither come,⁵ in the name of heaven! Does any hear, or will no one aid me? Why do ye delay? Women have destroyed me, captive women. Dreadful, dreadful things have I suffered! Woe is me for my shame! Whither can I betake myself? Whither can I go? Flying aloft into the ether of heaven shall I betake myself to the divine abodes where Orion or Sirius dart forth from their eyes flaming beams of fire? or shall I speed to the gloomy ferry of Hades, wretch that I am?

CHORUS. 'Tis pardonable, when one has met with evils too great to bear, for him to quit a wretched existence.

³ 1079. πᾶ κάμψω πᾶ βῶ. P.

⁵ 1093. ὦ ἴτε· ἴτ' ἴτε. P.

⁴ 1089. ἔνοπλον· εὖοπλον.
P. well equipped.

AGAMEMNON.

Hearing an outcry, I am come hither : for with no gentle voice has Echo, daughter of the mountain crag, spoken throughout the army, producing uproar. And had we not known that the towers of the Phrygians had fallen before the spear of the Greeks, this din would have caused alarm in no slight degree.

POLYM. O dearest of men, for I recognised thee, Agamemnon, when I heard thy voice, seest thou what sufferings I endure?

AGAM. Ha ! miserable Polymestor, who hath destroyed thee ? Who hath deprived thine eye of sight, suffusing thine eyeballs with blood ? and who hath slain these thy children ? Assuredly great indignation must he have had against thee and thy children, whoever he was.

POLYM. 'Tis Hecuba, who with captive women has ruined—not ruined, but more than ruined me.

AGAM. What sayest thou ? Hast thou done this deed, as he says ? Hast thou, Hecuba, dared this inconceivable act of boldness ?

POLYM. O me, what wilt thou say ? Is she, then, somewhere near me ? Show me, tell me where she is, that clutching her in my hands I may rend her asunder, and mangle her flesh.

AGAM. Ho there, what dost thou ?

POLYM. By the gods I entreat thee, let me lay my frantic hand upon her.

AGAM. Hold ! And when thou hast cast out thy barbarian temper from thy heart, speak ; that having heard both from thee and her in turn the reason why thou sufferest this, I may decide with justice.

POLYM. I will speak. There was one of the sons of Priam, the youngest, Polydorus, a son of Hecuba, whom his father Priam commits to me from Troy, to bring up in my house, having then some suspicion⁶ of the capture of Troy. Him I slew : and the reason why I slew him, now hear ; how prudently I did it and with what careful forethought. I feared lest this son, being left a foe to thee, should gather the Trojans together, and join in repeopling Troy : and that the Achæans, having found that one of the house of Priam was alive, should again⁷ make an expedition against the land of the Phrygians, and should then harass these Thracian plains and drive off the plunder ; and evil should come upon the neighbours of the Trojans, the evil under which, O king, we are now labouring. But Hecuba, when she learned the fatal end of her son, brought me hither with some pretext like this, that she would tell me of the hidden treasures of gold belonging to the house of Priam, in Ilium : and she introduces me alone with my children into the tent, that no one else might know these secrets. And I seat myself on the centre of a couch, bending my knees ; and there were sitting there many damsels of the Trojans, some on my left hand and some on my right, as if forsooth beside a friend ; holding in their hands a loom of Edonian workmanship, and were praising it, inspecting these garments at the light : but others, viewing the shaft of my Thracian javelin, deprived me of a twofold attire. And as many as had been mothers were tossing my children in their arms as if greatly admiring them, so that they might be far from their father, changing them about from hand

⁶ 1135. ὑποπτος active. Porson.

⁷ 1141. ἄρειαν αἰροῦεν. P.

to hand ; and then, after words of wondrous gentleness — how thinkest thou ? suddenly grasping swords from somewhere beneath their robes, they stab my children ; while others, just like enemies, seizing my hands and limbs held me ; and when I desired to succour my children, if indeed I strove to raise my face, they held me down by the hair ; or if to move my hands, from the multitude of women I wretched was powerless. But at last, a woe full of woe, they perpetrated most horrid deeds : for having taken their buckles they pierce, they mangle the balls of mine eyes ; then through the tents they escaped in flight ; and I springing forth like a wild beast, pursue the murderous hounds, examining every wall, like a huntsman, striking, beating down. Such treatment have I suffered, while striving to promote thy interests, and for having slain thy enemy, Agamemnon. But that I may not prolong my speech, if any one in time past has spoken ill of women, or if there be any one now so speaking, or shall be so hereafter, all this I will express in a few words : neither sea nor land produces such a race of creatures ; and every man that meets them knows it.

CHORUS. Speak not so proudly, nor, connecting the female sex with thine own evils, thus abuse them all ; for most of us are indeed praiseworthy,⁸ but some are in the number of the vicious.

HEC. Agamemnon, with men never ought their tongue to have greater force than their deeds ; but if a man has done virtuous actions, virtuous ought his argu-

⁸ 1185. ἐπίφθοροι. The scholiasts explain this word to mean ζηλωταί, ἐπαινetaί ; which is the sense obviously required by the passage, but

is by no means the sense of ἐπίφθοροι, which means “obnoxious to envy.” This and the following line are considered spurious by Dindorf.

ments to be, and if on the other hand vicious actions, then should his reasons be unsound, and never should he have the power of defending unjust deeds by fair words. Clever are they, however, who are well versed in these arts, though they cannot continue clever to the last, but miserably have they perished; none hath hitherto escaped. And so far in my prelude is what concerns thee, Agamemnon: but against this man I will proceed, and with arguments I will answer his—thou who sayest that, in releasing the Achæans from redoubled toil, and for the sake of Agamemnon, thou hast slain my son. But, thou vilest of men, in the first place never can the barbarian race be friendly to the Greeks, no, never can this be: and again, seeking what favour wast thou so zealous? Was it to contract alliance with one of them, or that thou wert of kindred blood, or with what pretext? Or were they likely to cut down the produce of thy land, making a second voyage? Whom dost thou think to persuade to this? 'Twas the gold, if thou wouldst speak the truth, that slew my son, and thy greediness for gain. For inform me of this: how was it when Troy prospered, and her towers yet held the city round about, and Priam was alive, and the spear of Hector flourished, why didst thou not then, since as thou sayest thou wast desirous to confer a favour on this man, while thou wast bringing up my child, and hadst him in thy palace, why didst thou not slay him, or come and drag him alive to the Argives? But when we were no longer in the light of fortune, and our citadel announced [was announcing P.] by its smoke that it was in the hands of our enemies, then didst thou slay a guest who had come to thy hearth. In addition to this then, hear how base thou

shalt appear. Thou wast bound, if thou wast a friend to the Achæans, to have brought the gold which thou confessest that thou hast, not thine own but this man's, and to have given it to men in need and for a long time banished from their fatherland. But thou hast not even up to this time the courage to release it from thy hand, but continuest still to hold it in thy palace. And yet by nurturing my son, as thou wast bound to nurture him, and by preserving him, thou wouldst have gained fair honour : for in adversity are those friends who are good most clearly seen ; but prosperity itself, in each case, has its own friends. And if thou wert in want of money, and he had been prosperous, my son would have been to thee for a mighty treasure : but now neither hast thou that man for a friend to thee, and the profit of the gold is gone, and thy children too, and thou thyself farest thus. But to thee, Agamemnon, I say, if thou shalt succour this man, thou wilt appear base. For thou wilt do well by a stranger who is neither pious nor faithful to those to whom he should have been so, who is not holy, who is not just. But thyself I will bid enjoy thy miseries, being such as thou art ; but my lord I revile not.

CHORUS. Alas, alas ! How do good deeds ever give to mortals an occasion for good arguments.

AGAM. 'Tis grievous indeed for me to decide upon the evils of others : but nevertheless it is compulsory on me : for it even involves disgrace for me, having taken this business in hand, now to reject it. To me then, that thou mayest know, thou appearest to have murdered one who was thy guest not for my sake, much less for the sake of the Achæans ; but that thou mightst keep the treasure in thine own house. But

thou sayest things to suit thy purpose, being in misfortune. It may be, then, among you an easy matter to murder one's guest: but among us Greeks at least this is a foul crime. How then, if I decide that thou art not in the wrong, may I avoid blame? I could not do so. But since thou hast dared to do what is not right, endure at the same time what is not pleasant.

POLYM. Woe is me! vanquished, as it seems, by a female slave; I shall have to give account to my inferiors.

HEC. ⁹ Wilt thou not do so justly, seeing thou hast done evil deeds?

POLYM. Woe is me for these children, and for mine eyes, wretch that I am!

HEC. ¹ Thou grievest: what, deemest thou that I grieve not for my child?

POLYM. Thou rejoicest in insulting over me, O thou worker of all wickedness!

HEC. What, ought I not to rejoice at having avenged myself upon thee?

POLYM. But not so, perchance, when the wave of the sea shall ——

HEC. Didst thou say, shall bear me on shipboard to the coasts of Greece?

POLYM. Nay, but shall overwhelm thee, fallen from the masthead of the ship.

HEC. At whose hands meeting with this compulsory fall?

POLYM. Thyself, on thy feet, shalt climb up the mast of the ship.

⁹ 1284. This speech is attributed to Agamemnon by P.

¹ τί δ', ἡμᾶς κ.τ.λ. τί δ'

ἡμᾶς; κ.τ.λ. P.—sic distinguendum. DIND.—i. e., But what of me? deemest thou, etc.

HEC. With wings on my back, or by what means?

POLYM. Thou wilt become a hound with eyes of fire.

HEC. And how knowest thou the change of my form?

POLYM. The Thracian prophet, Dionysus,² declared these things.

HEC. But did he not reveal to thee any of the evils which thou sufferest?

POLYM. Nay, for then never shouldst thou have entrapped me thus with treachery.

HEC. And shall I fulfil my fate there³ alive, or dead?

POLYM. Dead, and the name of thy tomb shall be ——

HEC. Called after my form, or what,⁴ wilt thou say?

POLYM. The monument of the illfated hound, a sign to mariners.

HEC. Little care I, now at least that thou hast given me satisfaction.

POLYM. Aye, and it is fated that thy child Cassandra die.

HEC. I spurn the omen: I resign it for thyself to suffer.

POLYM. This man's wife will slay her, a bitter guardian of his house.

HEC. Never may the daughter of Tyndarus become so frantic.

² 1267. cf. Herod. vii. 3.

³ 1270. ἐνθάδ'—in mari. ibid.—βίον. Absurdum est βίον post θανοῦσ' ἢ ζῶσα dictum—corrigendum ποτμον. DIND.

⁴ 1272. ἡ τί. ἡ τι. P. i. e., Can it be that thou wilt say some name commemorating my form?

POLYM. Aye, and this man too raising an axe high over him.

AGAM. Ho there ! art thou mad, and desirous of meeting with some mischief ?

POLYM. Slay me ; for in Argos a bath of blood awaits thee.

AGAM. Will ye not drag him, ye slaves, out of our way by force ?

POLYM. Art thou pained [thou art pained, P.] at hearing it ?

AGAM. Will ye not stop his mouth ?

POLYM. Gag it ; for the word is spoken ?

AGAM. Will ye not with all speed cast him out into some desert island, since he is thus over-bold of speech ? But do thou, Hecuba, O thou wretched one, go and bury the two corpses. But ye, O Trojan women, must draw near to the tents of your lords : for now I perceive here the breezes that will speed us home. And may we have a happy voyage to our fatherland, and behold all prospering in our homes, being released from these toils.

CHORUS. Begone to the harbour and to the tents, my friends, ye who are about to experience the hardships of a master's rule ; for inflexible is necessity.

M E D E A.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

NURSE.

PÆDAGOGUS.

MEDEA.

CHORUS OF FEMALE CITIZENS.

CREON.

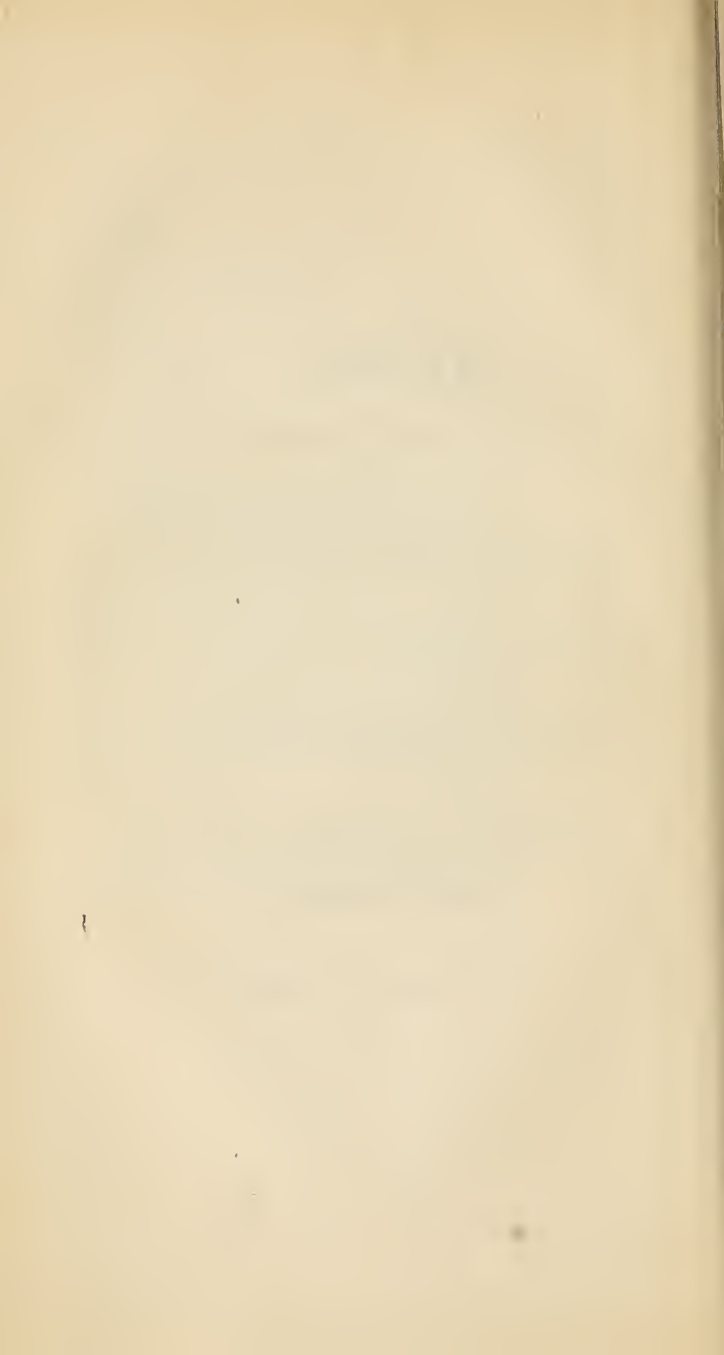
JASON.

ÆGEUS.

MESSENGER.

CHILDREN OF MEDEA.

The Nurse speaks the Prologue.



ARGUMENT.

JASON having arrived at Corinth and bringing Medea with him, plights his troth to Glauce the daughter of Creon, king of the Corinthians. Medea, then, being on the point of being exiled from Corinth by Creon, entreats that she may abide yet one day : and obtaining her request, in requital of the favor, she sends to Glauce by the hands of her children the present of a robe and a chaplet of gold ; by wearing which she loses her life, and Creon, by embracing his daughter, dies likewise. Then Medea, having slain her own children, ascends a chariot of winged serpents, which she had received from the Sun, and flies to Athens, where she marries Ægeus the son of Pandion. But Pherecydes and Simonides say that Medea restored Jason to youth by boiling him up anew. And concerning his father Æson, the Poet who wrote the "Returns from Troy" speaks thus—

But straightway she made the beloved Æson a blooming youth having stripped off from him old age by the wisdom of her understanding, boiling many drugs in cauldrons "of gold."

And Æschylus in the "Nurses of Dionysus" recounts how she restored to youth the nurses of Dionysus also, with their husbands, by boiling them anew. And Staphylus says that Jason was, after a sort, killed by Medea : for that she bade him sleep under the stern of the Argo, when the ship was on the point of falling to pieces from age ; at any rate, that Jason died in consequence of the stern falling upon him.

[Euripides] appears to have stolen this drama, by remodelling the tragedy of Neophron, as both Dicæarchus says, in his "Life

of Hellas" and Aristotle in his "Memoirs." But they blame him for not having preserved the acting in the character of Medea, but making her burst into tears, when she was plotting against Jason and his wife. But the introduction is praised for expressing intense emotion, and the continuation—"Would that in the woods of Pelion" and what follows. And it is from ignorance of this that Timachidas says he has put the cart before the horse: as likewise has Homer, *Od.* v. 264,—

"Having arrayed him in fragrant garments, and washed him in the bath."

ANOTHER ARGUMENT,

BY ARISTOPHANES THE GRAMMARIAN.

MEDEA, from her hatred to Jason, in consequence of his having married Glauce the daughter of Creon, slew Glauce and Creon and her own sons, and then deserted Jason, going to live with Ægeus. The subject of the Drama is found in neither of the other Tragedians. The scene of the Drama is supposed to be in Corinth, and the Chorus consists of female citizens. It was brought out in the archonship of Pythodorus, in the 87th Olympiad, B.C. 432. Euphorion was first, Sophocles second, Euripides third. [The plays of Euripides were] the Medea, the Philoctetes, the Dictys, and the Reapers, a satyric drama. This (last) is not preserved.

M E D E A.

1—21.]

NURSE. Oh that the bark of Argo had never sped her way to the Colchian's land, the dark Symplegades! Oh that in the woods of Pelion the cloven pine had never fallen, nor compelled to the oar the hands of men most valiant, who went on Pelias' errand for the all golden fleece. For then my mistress Medea would not have sailed to the towers of the land of Iolcos, smitten to the soul with love for Jason: nor would she, having prevailed on the damsels, daughters of Pelias, to slay their sire, have become a dweller in this land of Corinth with her husband and her children; striving to please, by her exile, the citizens of the land whither she has come, and herself in all matters conforming to the will of Jason,—which is the greatest preservative of happiness, when a wife is not at enmity with her husband. But now all things are at variance, and the dearest ties are shaken: for Jason, after deserting his own children and my mistress, is lulled to rest in royal nuptials, having taken to wife the daughter of Creon, who rules the land. And Medea, the wretched one, in her dishonour calls aloud upon his oaths, and recalls that

mightiest pledge, the pledge of his right hand, and summons the gods to witness what a return she receives from Jason. She lies too without sustenance, submitting her body to suffering, wasting away in tears the livelong time, ever since she has felt that she is dishonoured by her husband; neither raising her eyes nor lifting her visage from the ground: but like some rock or an ocean wave does she hearken when admonished by her friends, save only if at times turning her fair neck she bewails to herself her loved sire and her native land and that home, forsaking which she has arrived hither with a husband who now holds her in dishonour. And she, the wretched one, hath learned by misfortune, what it is not to be deprived of one's fatherland. She hates her children nor is she gladdened at the sight of them; and I fear her, lest she devise something strange; for stern is her spirit, nor will she brook to be treated ill. I know her and I fear her, that she will thrust a sharpened sword through her heart,¹ or even slay the prince and the bridegroom, and then incur herself some woe greater than all: for she is a fearful woman: not easily in sooth will one who joins with her in strife sing the song of victory. But hither are her children advancing, having ceased from their sport, with no thought of the woes of their mother, for the mind of the young is not wont to grieve.

PÆDAGOGUS. O aged bonds slave of the house of my mistress, wherefore in this solitude standest thou before the gates, muttering to thyself woeful words? how is it that Medea endures to be left apart from thee?

NURSE. O aged attendant on the children of Jason,

¹ After line 40, followed halls where the marriage bed
"having entered in silence the is made."

with faithful slaves the fortunes of their lords, falling out evilly, touch their very hearts; for I have arrived at that pitch of wretchedness that a longing has erept over me to come forth hither, and tell to earth and heaven the fortunes of my mistress.

PÆD. What? doth not the wretched woman yet cease from her wailings?

NURSE. I wonder at your simplicity. Her suffering is but in its commencement and has not yet reached its height.

PÆD. O foolish woman! if we may so speak of our lords; for she knows nothing of her later calamities!

NURSE. But what is this, old man? grudge not to impart it.

PÆD. 'Tis nothing: I regret even what has been said already.

NURSE. Nay, by thy beard, hide it not from thy fellowservant; for if it be needful, I will keep silence on these matters.

PÆD. I heard some one saying, (not seeming myself to hear,) as I approached the place where draughts were played, there where the elders sit, around the hallowed waters of Peirene; how Creon the prince of the land purposed to drive forth from Corinthian ground these children with their mother. This tale, however, whether it be certain I know not: but I could wish that this were not true.

NURSE. And will Jason brook that his children suffer this, even if he be at variance with their mother?

PÆD. Old ties are abandoned for the new, and he is no longer a friend to this house.

NURSE. We are ruined then if we are to add a new

woe to the old, before we have yet drained this to the dregs.

PÆD. But do you then, inasmuch as it is not a fitting season for your mistress to learn these matters, do you be still, and keep silence on this rumour.

NURSE. O my children, hear ye what a father is yours to you? Perish indeed—may he not: for he is my lord: but he stands convicted an evil doer to those who love him.

PÆD. And which of mortals is not? Is it but now that thou learnest this, that each one loveth himself better than his neighbour, some indeed justly, and others for profit' sake, since by reason of his marriage their father loves not these children?

NURSE. Go in, for it shall be well, go ye within the house, my children. And do thou by all means keep these children separate from her, nor let them draw near to their dark-souled mother: for ere now have I seen her lowering upon them as though she meditated some deed: nor will she cease from her wrath, I know it well, ere it fall on some one. However to her enemies, not to her friends, may she do it, whatever it be.

MEDEA (*within*).

Illfated that I am, and wretched by reason of suffering! woe, woe for me, would I might perish!

NURSE. This is the very thing, my dear children! your mother stirs up her heart and stirs up her wrath. Hasten with greater speed within the house, and come not within her gaze, neither approach her, but beware of her fierce temper and the hateful nature of her haughty soul. Go ye now, hasten with all speed within. For

it is evident that quickly she will again excite² with greater violence the cloud of her wailings. Whatever will she ($\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$)=Medea) do, high-spirited, hardly to be restrained, when bitten by the tooth of evil?

MEDEA. Alas, alas! I have suffered, much enduring, I have suffered things worthy of mighty lamentations. O ye accursed children of a hateful mother, may ye perish, with your sire, and may all his house come to nought!

NURSE. Ah me! ah me full of suffering! But why, as thou deemest ($\sigma\omicron\iota$) should thy children share their father's crime? Alas, my children, how excessively do I grieve, lest ye suffer somewhat! Fearful are the tempers of princes, and, so it is ($\pi\omega\varsigma$), having little control but great power, hardly do they relinquish their anger. For to be accustomed to live in a state of mediocrity is a preferable lot: be it mine³ then to pass my declining years, if not in grandeur, at least in security. For of the middle order of life, in the first place victory abides in the very utterance of its name,⁴ and in its use is far the best for mankind; but excess carries with it no advantage to mortals; and when the deity is incensed, it brings greater curses upon families.

CHORUS.

I heard a voice, I heard the cry of the wretched

² 107. Vide Elmsl. ad loc.—but according to Matthiæ § 496. 4. $\alpha\nu\acute{\alpha}\psi\epsilon\iota$ is to be taken passivè, with $\nu\acute{\epsilon}\phi\omicron\varsigma$ for nom. case.—cf. Lady of the Lake.

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke

As flashes flame thro' sable smoke,

Kindling its wreaths long dark and low

To one broad gleam of ruddy glow.

³ 125. Herod. iii. 80.

⁴ 127. Elms. ad loc.

Colchian dame, nor is she yet appeased. But tell us, aged dame, *what this is* : for as I stood by the hall with its double portals, I heard a wailing within : nor am I pleased, old woman, at the woes of this house, for ⁵ it has been rendered dear to me.

NURSE. This house exists no longer : these things are already vanished. For a royal nuptial bed receives him, and she, my mistress, is wasting away her life in her chamber, in no way consoled at heart by the converse of any of her friends.

MEDEA. Alas ! Oh that the fire of heaven would pass thro' my temples ! For why is it any longer gain for me to live on ? Woe ! woe ! oh that I might rest in death, forsaking a hateful existence !

CHORUS. Didst thou hear O Jove and Earth and Light, what a song of wailing the wretched wife pours forth ? Why, prithee, should the desire of thine ⁶ insatiate couch, O thou foolish one, hasten the end of thy life ? Pray not for that. But if thy husband admires a new marriage-bed, be not thou enraged at him for this : in this matter Jove will be thine advocate. Pine not away so grievously, bewailing the partner of thy bed.

MEDEA. O mighty Themis and thou revered Diana, behold ye the wrongs I suffer, I who with mighty oaths bound my accursed husband ? May I one day behold

⁵ 137. P. μὴ φίλια κέκρानται, deeds have been done which I love not. Elmsl. μοι φιλία κέκρानται friendship has been brought about—in both cases κέκρानται for κέκραται from κραίνω. Fors. κέκρᾱται from κερᾶννυμι, has been contracted.

⁶ 150. τᾷς ἀπλήστον κοίτας ἔρος. Fors. “his insatiate desire of this marriage. But Elmsl. ἀπλάστου for ἀπλάτου,—widowed. “The desire of thy widowed couch, = ἀνάνδρον.

him and his bride crushed in pieces, they and their home ! for they dare first to do me wrong. O my father, O my country, whom I shamelessly deserted having slain my brother !

NURSE. Hear ye what words she utters ? how she calls on Themis, invoked in special prayer, and Jove, who is deemed the ruler of oaths among mortals ? It cannot be in any little time that my mistress will lull her wrath to rest.

CHORUS. Would that she would come into our sight and hear the sound of the words we utter, if so she might remit her sullen anger and the temper of her mind. Never, in sooth, let zeal on my part at least be lacking to my friends. But go thou, and conduct her hither without the house, and tell her these words of⁷ friendship : and be quick, before she do any harm to those within : for this grief of hers hurries on with impetuous violence.

NURSE. I will do so : but I fear that I shall not persuade my mistress : yet I will grant you this boon of trouble.⁸ Although she looks fiercely on her slaves with the scowl of a lioness that has just brought forth, whenever any one approaches near her, offering to address her. Indeed, thou wouldst not err were you to call the men of old time foolish, and wise in nought, whoever they were, who invented hymns for feastings and banquets and suppers, the sounds that sweeten life ; but no mortal has found out how by music and songs sung to the many stringed lyre, to assuage the distressing griefs of mortals : griefs from which death, and fearful

⁷ 182. P. φίλα, καὶ τὰδ' αὔδα, making φίλα the voc. sing. which is repugnant to the

metre of the strophe 156.

⁸ i. e., to oblige you, I will undertake this task.

misfortunes overturn the houses of men. And yet 'twere gain for mortals to cure these evils with song : but there, where costly feasts are spread, why needlessly do they prolong the strain ? For the present satisfaction of the feast carries with it its own gratification to mortal men.

CHORUS. I heard a sound of lamentations full of groans : and with shrill plaintive complaints for her woes, she calls upon the traitor to her bed, her faithless husband : and suffering wrongfully she invokes Themis daughter of Jove, the Goddess of oaths, Themis who caused her to go to the opposite shore of Greece, thro' the surge by night over the briny, the boundless pass of the Pontus.

MEDEA. Women of Corinth, I have come forth from my home, that ye may find no fault with me ; for I know that many of mankind are haughty, some ⁹ in private life, others in public : while those of a quiet walk of life have incurred an ill name and the imputation of laziness. For justice resides not, in the eyes of mortals, of him who before he has fully learned the heart of another man, hates him at sight, without suffering wrong at his hand. And it is the duty of a stranger, certainly, to accommodate himself to the state : and I do not even praise that citizen who, being self-willed, renders himself from folly a nuisance to his countrymen. But in my case this unexpected event which has fallen on me has crushed my spirit : moreover I am lost, and having relinquished the pleasure of living, I long to die, my friends : for he in whom my all was placed, (as far as I could rightly un-

⁹216. Hermann adopts the interpretation of Seidler, and is followed by Jacobs : "some

indeed whom I myself have seen, others of whom I have heard."

derstand)¹ he, my husband, has turned out the vilest of men. But of all things that have life and sense, we women are the most miserable race: we, who must first with an exceeding sum purchase us a husband, and receive a lord over our persons, (for this is even a more grievous evil than the former): and in this, too, there is the greatest risk, whether we shall receive a bad master or a good one: for divorces are not honourable to women, nor is it possible to repudiate a husband: and she who has arrived among new customs and new laws must needs be a prophetess (not having learned it of oneself) as to what kind of husband she is most likely to meet with. Then, should our husband dwell happily with us having laboured so far with success, not violently imposing the yoke, 'tis an enviable life: but if not, 'twere better to die. For when a man is disgusted with associating with those of his own home, going out he relieves his heart of its loathing, betaking himself to some friend or to his comrades: but we are compelled to look to one person alone. And they say of us, how we live a life of security at home while they do battle with the spear, thinking unwisely: for rather would I stand thrice beside the shield than be a mother once. But really the same argument applies not to you and to me: for you have here your country and the halls of your father and the society of your friends; while I, desolate, homeless, am insulted by my husband, I, borne off as plunder² from a barbarian land, having no mother, no brother, no kinsman with whom to seek a refuge from this calamity.

¹ 228. MATTH.—“ Ille in quo bene cognoscendo summa rerum omnium mearum verte-

batur. HEATH.—γινώσκεις καλῶς, P. you well know.

² 256. This is a sneer against the Argonautic expedition.

Thus much therefore I will desire to obtain from thee, that if I may discover any means and contrivance whereby to execute just vengeance on my husband, and on him who has given him his daughter, and on the bride, thou wilt keep silence on it: for in all other things, indeed, a woman is full of fear, and fainthearted at prowess and to look on steel: but when she is wronged in respect of her marriage bed, there is no other temper that thirsts more for blood.

CHORUS. I will do this, for justly wilt thou avenge thyself, Medea, on thy husband; and I wonder not that thou mournest over thy mischances. But I see Creon ruler of this land advancing hither, the messenger of some new counsels.

CREON.

Thee, of sullen brow, and enraged against thine husband, Medea, I have decreed that thou shalt quit this land an exile, taking with thee thy two children, and that thou make no delay: for I am the arbiter of this command, and I will not return back again to my home, before I shall have cast thee out beyond the boundaries of this land.

MEDEA. Woe, woe! I, the wretched one, perish in utter destruction: for my foes are now crowding all their sail, and there is no escape from wretchedness easy to be attained. Nevertheless I will ask him, though suffering wrongfully as I do—For what cause drivest thou me from thy land, O Creon?

CREON. I fear thee (there is no need to disguise my words) that thou wilt do some irremediable mischief to my daughter. And many things are inferred³ from this

³ 284. Or *ξυμβάλλεται* may be equal to *σύμβολα ἔστι*, there are many signs or tokens of this fear.

fear: thou art by nature crafty and skilled in many an evil heart, and thou art annoyed at being deprived of thy husband's bed: moreover I hear that thou threatenest, (as they report to me) that thou wilt do somewhat to him that gives up his daughter and the bridegroom and the bride. This therefore I will prevent, before I suffer it, for it were better for me, lady, now to be hateful to thee, than giving way to pity hereafter grievously to repent it.

MEDEA. Alas, alas! It is not now for the first time, but often before, Creon, has rumour done me harm and worked me mighty evils. Never should the man, who is possessed of good sense, have his children taught to be overwise. For ⁴besides another charge which they incur, I mean the charge of inactivity, they occasion hostile envy from their fellow-citizens. For by offering new-fashioned wisdom to dolts, you will seem to be useless, and unwise: or again, if you are accounted superior to those who fancy they possess some abstruse knowledge, you will appear troublesome in your city. And I myself also share this fate: for being wise, by some I am looked on with envy, by others with dislike: and yet I am not so very wise. Thou however fearest me, lest some misfortune jar upon thee. I am not so disposed—fear me not, Creon—as to do wrong against princes. For wherein hast thou wronged me? Thou hast betrothed thy daughter to him towards whom thy inclination led thee: my husband indeed I hate; but thou, I suppose, didst this act in wisdom. And, as it is now, I grudge not that thy fate should be prosperous. ⁵Con-

⁴ 297. Vide Herm. ad Elmsl.

⁵ 313. *νυμφεύειν* has the three

senses of *dicere* — *nubere* — dare. Vide Liddell and Scott.

tract alliances—be happy : but suffer me to dwell in this land ; for even though wronged, I will be silent, vanquished by them that are mightier.

CREON. Thou speakest words soft to the ear, but within my heart I have a dread that thou art plotting some mischief ; and by so much the less than before do I trust thee. For a woman quick to passion and similarly a man is easier to guard against than one who is still and cunning. But begone with all speed, speak not a word more ; since this is fixed and thou hast no contrivance whereby thou mayest remain amongst us, being, as thou art, inimical to me.

MED. Nay, I beseech thee by thy knees and by thy newly married daughter.

CREON. Thou wastest words : for never wilt thou persuade me.

MED. Wilt thou then drive me forth, and in no wise respect my supplications ?

CREON. Aye, for I love not thee more than mine own house.

MED. O my country, how in very truth do I now remember thee !

CREON. Aye : for, save my children, to me also my country is most dear.

MED. Alas, alas ! how great an evil is love to mortals !

CREON. Even so, I suppose, as circumstances present themselves.

MED. O Jove, may he not escape thine eye, who is the cause of these evils.

CREON. Begone, vain woman, and rid me of this trouble.

MED. 'Tis I that am in trouble, and I want no troubles more.⁶

CREON. Speedily thou shalt be thrust out by force at the hands of my attendants.

MED. Nay, at least not that—but I beseech thee, Creon.

CREON. Thou wilt give annoyance, as it seems, O woman.

MED. I will begone: I prayed not to obtain this from thee.

CREON. Wherefore then dost thou press me, and not quit the country?

MED. Suffer me to remain this single day, and to complete my plans, how we shall flee, and to secure a place of refuge for my children, since their father recks nothing of providing for his offspring. Yet do thou pity them: thou too, in sooth, art the father of children: and it is natural that thou shouldst have a kindly feeling for them. For I have no care for myself whether I shall be an exile, but I lament for them involved in calamity.

CREON. In no wise is my temper that of the tyrant, and by respecting the suppliant often in truth have I harmed myself. Even now I see that I am in error, lady; but nevertheless thou shalt obtain this boon. But I forewarn thee, if to-morrow's light of heaven shall behold thee and thy children within the bounds of this land, thou shalt die. This threat hath been spoken in sincerity. But now, if thou must remain, remain for a single day, inasmuch as *in that time* thou wilt do none of the fearful deeds I dread.

334. P. after Musgr. Trouble indeed! and do not I feel trouble?

CHOR. Ill-fated lady, alas, alas wretched by reason of thy woes! Whither ever wilt thou betake thyself? What hospitality, what home or what country wilt thou discover to save thee from misery? Into what a sea of affliction from which there is no escape hath the God conducted thee, Medea!

MEDEA. Ill have I fared on all sides. Who will contradict me? But not in this way shall these things end, think it not yet. There are still struggles for the newly married pair, and for those who betrothed them no slight troubles remain. For deemest thou I would ever have fawned on that man, save to gain some end or to devise some plot? I would not even have addressed him, nor touched him with my hands. But he has come to such a pitch of folly, that when it was in his power to baffle my plans by casting me out from the land, he has permitted me to remain this single day,—in which day I will make corpses of three of my foes, the father and the daughter and mine own husband. But though I have many a way of death against them, I know not by which I shall first make my attempt, my friends, whether I shall secretly fire the nuptial hall, or thrust a sharpened sword through their hearts, entering in silence the chamber where the nuptial bed is laid. But there is one thing against me: if I shall be caught entering the palace and contriving my plans, I shall die and offer an object of derision to my foes. 'Twere best, by that straight path wherein I am most skilled, to take them off by poison.—Well.—And now, suppose they are dead. What city will receive me? What stranger, making his land my refuge and his home secure, will save my life? There is none. Waiting then yet some little time, if any tower of safety appear to me, in craft

and silence I will pursue this murder. But if some unavoidable mischance repel me, I myself seizing a sword, even though I should die, will slay them, and will rush on to the utmost pitch of recklessness. For never, I swear it by my mistress whom I reverence most of all gods, and whom I have chosen as my coadjutor, by Hecate who dwells in the inmost corner of my hearth ! never shall any one of them with impunity wring my heart. But bitter for them and mournful will I make their marriage, and bitter their alliance, and my exile from their land. But on : be not sparing of whate'er thou knowest, Medea, in thy counsels and thy plans ; on, to the deed of danger : now is the struggle of courage. See'st thou what thou art enduring ? It becomes not thee to be an object of derision to the race of Sisypheus, to the nuptials of Jason, thee, who art sprung from a noble sire, and from the Sun. But thou art skilled. And I moreover am a woman, for good indeed most inefficient, but the most crafty worker of all iniquity.

CHOR. The streams of hallowed rivers run upward to their spring, and the course of justice and all else is reversed. Among men are the counsels of deceit, and faith in the gods no longer abides firm : and that my sex⁷ may win fair renown, fame will change [P. changes]. Honour is coming to the female race : no longer shall a slanderous repute haunt women. But the Muses shall cease from their strains of old, from celebrating our perfidy. For, as I deem, Phœbus, leader of melody, committed not to woman the divine strains of the lyre, since it would have echoed back a strain against the race of men : but a long period of time has many a tale

⁷ 415. βιοτὰν = φύσιν. SCHW.

to tell of our fate as well as that of men. Thus thou sailedst forth from the home of thy fathers, thy heart maddened *with love*, having passed between the twin rocks of the ocean; and now thou dwellest on a foreign soil, having lost the resting place of thy widowed bed, wretch that thou art, and art driven forth a dishonoured exile from the land. And all the respect for oaths is gone and no longer does shame abide in mighty Greece, but has fled up on high. But to thee, thou ill-fated one, there remain not the halls of thy sire to be a refuge from thy woes, and of thy nuptial bed a new queen mightier than thou presides over thy house.

JASON.

It is not now for the first time but often before, have I observed what an irremediable mischief is an unyielding temper. For when it was in thy power to enjoy this land and this home bearing lightly the determination of thy superiors, for thy rash words thou art to be exiled from the land. And to me indeed it is no consequence: never cease from saying how Jason is the vilest of men. But with respect to what thou hast said against royalty, deem it all gain that thou art punished by exile only. I for my part have continually endeavoured to appease the wrath of the incensed princes, and wished thee to remain; but thou wouldst not cease from thy folly, ever speaking evil words against the royal house: wherefore thou art to be exiled from the land. But nevertheless even after this not wanting to my friends, have I come hither, providing for thy interests at least, O lady, so that thou mightest not go into exile with thy children, either penniless or in want of anything. Exile brings in its train many an evil; for even though thou detestest me, never could I feel unkindly towards thee.

MEDEA. O vilest of the vile, for this is the greatest reproach I can tell thee with my tongue against thy unmanliness,⁸ hast *thou* come to me? hast *thou* come, thou who hast become most hateful?⁹ In sooth this is not confidence or boldness, when thou hast wronged thy friends to look them in the face, but the greatest of all pests among mankind, impudence: yet thou hast done well in coming. For both I shall be lightened in spirit by reproaching thee, and thou wilt be pained by hearing it. But from the very outset will I begin first to speak. I saved thy life, as all the Greeks well know who with thee entered the same bark *Argo*, when thou wast sent to master the fire breathing¹ bulls with the yoke, and to sow the fatal field: and that dragon, who guarding the all-golden fleece preserved it with many folded coils, sleepless ever, it I slew and held aloft for thee the beacon light of safety. And I myself, having forsaken my father and mine own home, arrived with thee at *Iolcos* the land of *Pelion*, with more spirit than wisdom; and I slew *Pelias*, so that he fell by a death most grievous, at the hands of his own children, and I rid thee of every cause of fear. And thou, having experienced this at my hands, vilest of men, hast forsaken me, and taken to thyself another nuptial bed, when thou hast children born to thee: for hadst thou still been childless, 'twould have been pardonable in thee to have been smitten with this marriage. But the faith of oaths is vanished; nor can I understand whether thou countest the gods, who

⁸ 465. According to Porson's punctuation, translate thus: For this I can tell thee, the greatest reproach against thy unmanliness in point of tongue.

⁹ After v. 467, some editions have "Both to the gods and to me and to the whole race of men."

¹ 479. Or ζεύγλαισι may be governed by ἐπιστάτην.

then ruled, to have no more power, or that new laws are in these days being imposed among mankind, since at least thou art conscious that thou hast not kept faith with me. Alas, for that right hand which thou didst so often take, and for these knees, how fruitlessly have I been polluted by the touch of a villain, and have been cheated of my hope! Come, for I will hold converse with thee as though thou wert a friend, deeming not indeed that I shall receive any good at thy hand, but notwithstanding I will speak; for being interrogated thou wilt be shown more vile. Now, whither must I betake myself? To the halls of my father!—which with my country I betrayed for thee, and arrived hither? or to the wretched daughters of Pelias? right well, I ween, would *they* receive me in their home whose sire I slew. For so the case stands; to my friends in my own home I have become a foe: and those whom I ought never to have harmed, by conferring benefits on thee I have as enemies. Wherefore, in requital for these things thou hast made me to be considered blessed throughout Greece to many women; and I have thee a wondrous spouse, and a faithful one—wretch that I am! if cast forth I am to be exiled from the land, destitute of friends, alone with my lonely children,—a fair fame in truth to the newly married bridegroom, that his children and she who saved his life are wandering beggars! O Jove, wherefore didst thou give to men certain tests of gold, such as is adulterate; but yet no stamp has been imprinted on their person whereby we may discern the villain among men.

CHOR. Fearful is the wrath, and hard to be appeased, when friends join in strife with friends.

JASON. I must, it seems, be no sluggard in speech,

but like the prudent pilot of a vessel with every stitch of canvass run from under (*i. e.* elude) thy wearisome loquacity. I then, since thou exaltest so high the favours thou hast done me, I deem that Cypris alone of gods and mortals was the guardian of my enterprise. Thou hast indeed a subtle wit, but 'tis an invidious argument to dwell on, that Love with his unerring bow compelled thee to preserve my life. However, I will not lay this down too nicely: for however it was thou didst me service, it is well.—However, at least, thou receivedst a greater advantage from my safety than thou conferredst upon me; as I will explain:—In the first place thou dwellest in the land of Greece, in place of a barbarian land, and thou knowest what justice is, and how to live under laws, not being at the mercy of force. Again, all the Greeks have seen that thou art wise, and thou hadst won renown: whereas hadst thou dwelt on the furthest borders of the world there had been no fame of thee: and for my own part might I have neither gold in my dwelling nor skill to hymn the strain sweeter than Orpheus, unless my lot were likewise made illustrious. Thus much, however, have I spoken of my own toils; for it was thyself that proposed this rivalry of words. But as to the reproaches which thou castest upon me for my royal alliance, in this matter I will show first, that I was wise; in the next place, discreet; in the third, an especial friend to thee and to my children: but do thou keep quiet. After I had removed hither from the land of Iolcos, bringing after me many insuperable difficulties, what better piece of good fortune could I have met with than to marry the daughter of a king, exile as I was? Not (where thou art nettled) hating thy marriage bed, nor enamoured of a

fresh bride, nor being earnest in a striving after many children : those born to me are enough, nor do I find fault there : but—what is the chief point—that we may live with honour, and may not be in want, well knowing that every friend flies out of the way of the poor man, and that I might bring up my children in a manner worthy of my house, and that begetting brothers to the children I have by thee, I might place them on the same footing, and uniting the family, I might be happy ;² for thou too hast some need of other children, and it is my advantage to profit my *present*, by means of a *future*, family. Then have I counselled ill ? Not even thou couldst say this, did not thy marriage bed provoke thee. But ye women have come to such a point, that so long as your marriage rights are preserved, ye think ye have everything ; but if on the other hand any mischance befall the nuptial couch, then all that is best and fairest ye deem most hostile. Yes, mortals ought to make them children from some other quarter, and the female sex should never have existed ; and so never would there have been evil among men.

CHOR. Jason, with speciousness hast thou adorned this speech. But yet to me at least, even if I shall speak contrary to thy wishes, thou seemest, in deserting thy wife, to act no just part.

MED. Verily in many respects I am different from many mortals. For in my mind, he who being dis-

² 565. This passage, which is corrupt, may be translated two ways, according to the accent and punctuation. 1. Porson, σοί τε γὰρ παίδων τί δεῖ ; for what need hast thou of children ? an expression totally out

of place. 2. Brunck, σοί τε γὰρ π. τι δεῖ· subaudi ἄλλων, for thou hast need of other children, as well as I. Elmsley suggests a very good emendation σοί τε γὰρ παίδων μέλει.

honest is yet gifted with craftiness of speech deserves the heaviest punishment: for priding himself on this, that with his tongue he can speciously bedeck dishonest deeds, he dares all villany; but yet he is not over wise. Even thus be not thou now specious to me, and cunning in thy speech: for a single word shall lay thee prostrate.³ It was thy part, if, as thou sayest, thou wert not a villain, to have contracted this marriage after gaining my consent, and not without the knowledge of thy friends.

JAS. Aye, and fairly, I ween, wouldest thou have acceded to this plan, if I had acquainted you with my intended marriage; thou, who even now canst not relax the fierce wrath of thy heart!

MED. 'Twas not this that swayed thee, but a barbarian wife threatened to turn out not over-honorable for thine old age.

JAS. Be well assured of this, 'twas for no love of woman I courted the royal bride whom I now possess, but even as I said before, wishing to preserve thee and to beget children of princely birth, of the same seed with mine own children, a bulwark to my house.

MED. May I never live a life of painful prosperity, nor be mine that wealth which may afflict my soul.

JAS. Knowest thou how to change thy prayer, and to appear much wiser? Never let lucrative things seem painful to thee, nor when fortunate deem thyself unfortunate.

MED. Insult me as thou wilt, since for thee there is a refuge, but I, desolate, must go an exile from this land.

³ 585. ἐκτενεῖ. according to Eustathius, followed by Porson, = ἐκτάδην ῥίψει — other-

wise, ἐκτενεῖ may mean "shall stretch thee on the rack."

JAS. Thyself hast chosen this part : blame no one else.

MED. By doing what? Was it by marrying and deserting thee?

JAS. It was by invoking impious curses upon the princes of the land.

MED. ⁴And I happen to have endured curses from thy house likewise.

JAS. ⁵Be sure, I will not contend further with thee on these subjects. But if thou desirest to receive any assistance in thine exile for thy children or thyself from my wealth, name it. For I am ready to give with ungrudging hand, and to send tokens to my guest-friends, who will do thee service. And if thou wilt not accept this, thou wilt be acting foolishly, lady : but by ceasing from thy passion thou wilt reap advantage.

MED. Neither will I use the services of *thy* guest-friends, nor receive any boon from thee, do not ⁶ even offer it to me : for the gifts of an evil man bear with them no profit.

JAS. Then I call the Gods to witness that I am ready in all things to serve thee and thy children : but good things please thee not, but in sullen pride thou repellst thy friends : wherefore shalt thou grieve the more.

MED. Begone : for thou art carried away with longing for thy newly married bride, lingering as thou art out of sight of the palace. Wed on : for perchance—for by heaven it shall be spoken—thou wilt contract such a marriage as thou wilt be glad to renounce.

⁴ 608. ἀπαία — Elmsley would take active “Aye, and I am disposed to curse *thy* Louse too”—so Monk, Matthiæ, and Diud.

⁵ ὡς = ἴσθι ὡς. cf. Elmsley.

⁶ 617. μήθ’ ἡμῖν. *neither* do thou offer it.

CHOR. Love when it comes with excessive vehemence gives to men [among men P.] neither honour nor virtue: but if Cypris come in moderation, there is not any goddess so gracious. Never, O queen, against me mayest thou speed from the golden bow the inevitable dart, having anointed its point with desire. But may sobriety, fairest gift of heaven, love to dwell in me: and never may Cypris, fearful deity, impose on me jarring passions and insatiate strife, smiting my heart with desire of another marriage bed; but, respecting a peaceful couch,⁸ may she vigilantly execute judgment on the bed of women. O my country, O my home, never may I become an outcast, having a life of difficulty hardly to be passed through, a life of most pitiable woes.⁹ In death, in death may I first be laid low, when I have reached that day: for there is no more exceeding woe than to be deprived of one's fatherland. Ourselves have seen it, we need not to learn it from the tales of others; for no city, no friend, had pity on thee who hast suffered the most fearful of sufferings. Ungracious may he perish, whoever is disposed not to respect his friends by opening the pure lock of his mind: to me for one never shall he be a friend.

ÆGEUS.

Medea, hail! for than this no man knows a better address whereby to greet his friends.

⁸ 641. (1.) according to Elmsl. *ὀξύφρων* = *ὀξύθυμος* = "with hasty wrath." (2). *κρίνει* may mean (a) keep asunder the nuptial beds of woman. (b) assign beforehand, (so that there may be no mistake after-

wards.) We have taken Elmsley's translation (*parata prompti expendere lecti jugulis crimina* —Buchan :) except in the matter of *ὀξύφρων*.

⁹ 646. P. *οἰκτρότατον ἀχίων* "the most pitiable of woes."

MED. O hail thou also, Ægeus, son of the wise Pandion! from whence art thou come to the soil of this land?

ÆGEUS. Having left the ancient oracle of Phœbus.

MED. And on what mission wentest thou to the prophetic centre of the earth?

ÆGEUS. To enquire how a race of children might be born to me.

MED. By heaven, hast thou then continued to live up to this time childless?

ÆGEUS. Childless I am, by the dispensation of some deity.

MED. Hast thou a wife or art thou inexperienced as to the marriage bed?

ÆGEUS. I am not without¹ my share of the nuptial couch.

MED. What then did Phœbus tell thee respecting children?

ÆGEUS. Words wiser than for a man to conjecture.

MED. Is it lawful that I should know the oracle of the god?

ÆGEUS. By all means; since in sooth it needs the interpretation even of a wise mind.

MED. What answer then gave he? say, if I am allowed to hear.

ÆGEUS. That I should not loose the projecting neck of the wine skin.

MED. Before you should have done what, or arrived at what land?

ÆGEUS. Before I should again have returned to my paternal hearth.

¹ ἄζυγος = expers.

MED. Desiring what then dost thou visit this land?

ÆGEUS. There is a certain Pittheus, king of the land of Trœzen.

MED. The son of Pelops, as they report, a most pious man.²

ÆGEUS. To him I wish to impart the response of the god.

MED. Yes; for the man is wise and much skilled in such matters.

ÆGEUS. And to me indeed he is the dearest of all my confederate friends.

MED. Well, mayest thou be fortunate and gain all that thou desirest.

ÆGEUS. But why has thine eye and thy frame thus wasted away?

MED. Ægeus, my husband is the basest of all men to me.

ÆGEUS. What sayest thou? tell me clearly of thy despondency.

MED. Jason wrongs me, without having suffered any wrong at my hand.

ÆGEUS. By doing what? tell me more plainly.

MED. He has taken another wife in addition to me, as the mistress of his house.

ÆGEUS. What?³ has he indeed dared this most shameful deed?

MED. Be assured he has: and we are scorned who were before his friends.

² 584. Herm. But according to Elmsl. "the most pious of the sons of Pelops." Valckenaer takes it in the sense of Homer's *δικαιότατος Κενταύρων*, ap-

plied to Chiron "tanquam inter omnes unus juris observantissimus."

³ 695. *ἦπου* P. Can he have etc.?

ÆGEUS. Was he smitten with desire, or did he hate thy marriage bed?

MED. Aye, smitten with a mighty desire: he was faithless to his friends.

ÆGEUS. Let him go then, since he is such a villain as thou sayest.

MED. He was smitten with a desire of obtaining an alliance with princes.

ÆGEUS. But who gives him the bride? pray, conclude the tale.

MED. Creon, who rules this Corinthian land.

ÆGEUS. Certainly,⁴ then, it were pardonable that you should be grieved, lady.

MED. I am ruined: and more than this, I am expelled from the land.

ÆGEUS. By whom? This again is another and a fresh evil that thou tellest of.

MED. Creon drives me forth, an exile from the land of Corinth.

ÆGEUS. And does Jason suffer it? I praise not this.

MED. By his words indeed, no; but⁵ in his heart he wishes it. But, I beseech thee, by this thy beard, and by thy knees, and I become thy suppliant, pity, pity me the ill-fated one, and see me not go into exile desolate, but receive me in thy country and in thy home, a suppliant at thy hearth. So may thy desire of offspring be accomplished for thee by the gods, and mayest thou thyself die in happiness. But thou knowest not what a piece of good fortune thou hast found in me; for I will make thee cease from being childless,

⁴ 703. *μὲν γὰρ* P. Yes, it is willing to put up with it were indeed etc. (Ironicè).

⁵ 703. P. *κατρεπεῖν*, but he

and will make thee the father of a race of children : such charms (or drugs) I know.

ÆGEUS. For many reasons, lady, I am ready to grant thee this boon, first from reverence to the Gods, in the next place by reason of the offspring whose birth thou dost promise me, for really in this respect I am altogether lost.⁶ But thus it stands with me : if thou wilt come to my land, I will strive to befriend thee with all justice. Thus much, however, I forewarn thee, lady ; from this land I shall not be willing to lead thee forth but if thou of thyself come to my halls, thou shalt remain inviolate, and never will I give thee up to any. But of thyself do thou remove thy foot from this soil, inasmuch as I wish to be blameless, even before strangers.

MED. It shall be so ; but if some pledge were given me of this, then should I be well satisfied in all points at thy hand.

ÆGEUS. What, dost thou not trust me ? or what is thy difficulty ?

MED. I trust thee : but the house of Pelias is at feud with me, and also Creon : and to these, if thou wert bound indeed by oaths to me, thou wouldest not give me up from thy country, should they try to lead me away. But shouldst thou confer with them, being at the same time not bound by oath to the gods, thou mightest become their friend, and⁷ perchance give in to

⁶ 722. My whole race and name is extinct. SCHOLEF. :— for as regards begetting children, my strength is quite gone. MATTH.

⁷ 739. οὐκ ἂν πίθοιο. No sense whatever can be extracted

from the text in Dind. except by understanding ἐπικηρυκεί-μασιν οὐκ ἂν πίθοιο to mean, “ You would not abide by your engagements to me”—which is not the English of any of the words. MURETUS. The easiest

the demands made by their heralds: for my interests are weak, but they have wealth and a princely house.

ÆGEUS. Thou hast spoken words of much forethought, lady; but if it seems good to thee that I should do this, I refuse not: for both for me it is the safest course, that I should have some pretext to show to thy foes, and thy safety is more securely fixed. Name thou the gods.

MED. Swear by the plain of earth, and by the sun, the sire of my sire, and add to them the whole family of gods.

ÆGEUS. That I will do, or will not do, what? Say on.

MED. That neither thou thyself wilt ever cast me forth from thy land, and, if any of my foes seek to carry me away, thou wilt not voluntarily give me up, while thou livest.

ÆGEUS. I swear by earth and by the sacred majesty of the sun, and by all the gods, that I will abide by what I hear from thee.

MED. It sufficeth.⁸ But what art thou willing to suffer, if thou abidest not by this oath?

ÆGEUS. All that befalls the impious among mortals.

MED. Go in peace; for all is well: and I will arrive at thy city with all speed, having effected what I am about to do, and having attained what I desire.

CHOR. But may the son of Maia, guiding power,

emendation adopted is that of Porson: *τάχ' ἂν πίθοιο*. —Those who have a taste for more, are referred to Hermann and Elmsley.

οὐκ ἂν πίθοιο. Hoc contrarium est ejus quod dici de-

buit. Scribendum *τάχ' ἂν πίθοιο* cum Wytttenbachio. Dind.

⁸ 754. Est *πάθοιμι, βούλομαι παθεῖν* igitur *τί πάθοις*; valet, *τί βούλει παθεῖν*;—

SCHOLEF.

escort thee to thy home : and setting thy mind upon what thou desirest, mayest thou accomplish it : for to us thou hast proved thyself a noble man, O Ægeus.

MED. O Jove, and Justice daughter of Jove, and thou light of the sun, now shall I become glorious in victory over my foes, O my friends, and I have entered upon the path ; and now I have a hope that mine enemies will suffer retribution. For this man, where I was most in difficulty, has appeared a harbour for my designs : from him will I make fast the stern cables of my bark, when I have arrived at the city and the citadel of Pallas. But now I will impart to thee all my plans : and listen to my words not as to a pleasing tale. Having sent one of my servants to Jason, I will request him to come into my presence ; and when he is come, I will speak soft words to him, how I assent to these proceedings and how good they are,⁹—this¹ royal alliance which he is contracting, having deserted me—and that they are expedient and well judged ; and I will ask that my children may remain, not with the view of leaving my children in a hostile land for my foes to insult over, but that I may slay by subtilty the daughter of the king. For I will send them with gifts in their hands, bearing² them to the bride, that so they may not be exiled from the land, [bearing a finely woven robe and a chaplet wrought of gold] and if she receive the adornment and cast it around her person, miserably shall she perish, and whoever else shall touch the dam-

⁹ 777. καλῶς ἔχειν. P.

¹ 778. om. P.—The construction according to Dindorf's text will be. λέξω . . ὡς δοκεῖ μοι ταῦτα καὶ [ὡς] ταῦτα καλῶς ἔχει, i. e. οἱ γάμοι τυ-

ράννων οὗς ἔχει . . . καὶ [λέξω] ξύμφορα εἶναι κ. τ. λ. If ἔχειν be read (as in P. & Elmsl.) it must depend upon λέξω.

² 785. om. P.

sel : with such drugs will I anoint the gifts. Here however I cease this subject.—For I was bewailing what a deed remains for me then to do : for I must slay my children : there is no one who shall rescue them from me. Then, when I have overthrown in ruin the whole house of Jason, I will go forth from the land, flying the (pollution of the) murder of my children most dear to me, and having dared a most unholy deed. For to be derided by one's foes is a thing not to be endured, my friends. Let it proceed : what profit is it for me to live any longer ? For³ me there is neither country nor home nor refuge from my misery. Then was I in error when I left my father's halls, beguiled by the words of a Greek, who shall, please God, suffer retribution at my hand. For neither shall he ever see henceforward his children born of me alive, nor shall he beget a child of his newly married bride : for miserable must she miserably perish by my spells. Let no one account me contemptible or weak, much less peaceful, but of the contrary disposition, to my foes a grievous foe, and to my friends a generous friend : for the lives of such as these are most glorious.

CHOR. Since thou hast imparted this intention to me, I, desiring both to do thee service, and at the same time upholding the laws of mortals, warn thee not to do this deed.

MED. It must be so : but there is an excuse for thee, in saying these things ; for thou art not wronged as I am.

CHOR. But wilt thou endure to slay thy two children, lady ?

³ 798. οὐτ' ἐμοὶ P.

MED. Aye: for so would my husband be most grieved.

CHOR. But thou at least wilt become the most wretched of women.

MED. Let it go on,—all words that intervene⁴ are superfluous. But come, go thou and summon Jason: for thee I employ in all matters of fidelity—but say⁵ nothing of my resolutions, if as I deem thou art well disposed⁶ to thy mistress, and art a woman.

CHORUS.

Happy is the race of Erechtheus from of old, and children are they of the blessed Gods, feeding on wisdom most renowned, from a soil holy and inviolate, passing ever lightly through the clearest ether; in that land where, they say,⁷ golden-haired harmony of old brought forth the nine chaste Pierian Muses: and they tell too that Cyprius, quaffing draughts from the sweet-flowing Cephissus, breathes over the land⁸ gentle sweetly blowing gales of air; and ever and anon casting upon her locks a fragrant rosewreath, sends forth loves to sit by the side of wisdom, his fellow workmen in every kind of virtue. How then shall either the city of sacred streams or the hospitable⁹ land of friends receive thee,

⁴ 819. οὖν D. οἱ ὕ. P.

⁵ 822. λέξεις. P. This is objected to by Elmsl. because λέξεις μηδὲν is a solecism. It should be λέξεις οὐδὲν. But the future here would seem to carry with it an imperative force as in Æsch: sc. Th. 239. μηδὲν τῶν δ' ἐρεῖς κατὰ πτόλιν.

⁶ 823. φρονεῖς γ' εὔ. P.

⁷ 831. Or: the nine muses established (φυτεῦσαι) golden-haired Harmony.

⁸ 837. χώρας. P.—“Non dicitur ὕδατί με κατέχεεν aqua me perfudit; sed ὕδωρ μου κατέχεεν. Aristoph. Eq. 1088. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ εἶδον ὄναρ καὶ μούδοκεῖ ἢ θεὸς αὐτῇ Τοῦ δήμου καταχεῖν ἀρυταίνῃ πλουθυγί. εἰαν.—Lys. 551. ἡνπερ..... ἡμερον ἡμῶν....καταπνεύση. Plura dabit Matth. Gr. Gr. § 376 p. 504.—ELMSL.

⁹ 848. πόμπιμος=τὴν ἐκπεμφθεῖσαν ἐπιδεχομένην. SCH.

the slayer of her children, who art unholy among others?¹ Consider the deathblow of thy children, consider what a pollution of blood thou art contracting! Do not—by thy knees we all of us in every way supplicate thee—do not slay thy children.² Whence wilt thou gain presence of mind or hand and heart against thy children, employing fearful daring?³ Or how, casting thine eyes upon thy children, canst thou abstain from weeping at the fatal murder? Thou canst not, when thy children fall suppliant before thee, stain thy murderous hand with steadfast soul.⁴

JAS. I am come at thy bidding: for foe as thou art to me, thou shalt not⁵ fail of this at least; but I will hear what new thing thou desirest of me.

MED. Jason, I beg of thee to be forgiving of what has been said by me. And it is but reasonable thou shouldst bear with my passion, for many a friendly service has passed between us two. For I have been reasoning with myself, and have reproached myself. Rash woman that I am, why am I mad, and incensed against them that counsel wisely; and why do I set myself at feud with the princes of the land, and with my husband, who is doing for us that which is most expedient, by marrying a princess, and begetting brothers to my children? shall I not be quit of my wrath? What is it I suffer, while the gods dispense aright? Have I not

¹ 850. τὰν οὐχ ὁσίαν; μετ' ἄλλων σκέψαι—P. μετ' ἄλλων σκέψαι. Cum aliis, non mecum, delibera.—MATTH. Cum aliis, non cum Atheniensibus.—SCH.

² 855. μὴ om. P.

³ 856. πῶθεν D. πῶς δὲ P. πῶς σχήσεις μοῖραν φύνον,

[ὥστε] ἄδακρυν [εἶναί σοι]. How wilt thou keep the fatal murder from being wept over by thee?

⁴ 865. τλάμονι—P.

⁵ 867. οὐ τ' ἂν—P. for οὐ τοι ἂν, thou certainly shalt not.

children,⁶ and know I not that we must flee the land, and are in need of friends? Revolving these things, I felt that I was entertaining very evil counsels, and was foolishly incensed. Now therefore do I praise thee, and thou seemest to me⁷ to act wisely in contracting for us this additional alliance: but I was foolish, I, who ought to have had a share in these plans, and to have joined in concluding them, and to have stood by the nuptial bed, and to have felt joy in waiting on thy bride. But we women are what we are—I will not say merely evil. Wherefore⁸ it becomes thee not to assimilate thyself to the evil, nor to repay foolish things with folly. I give in and confess that I was foolish then, but now I have taken better counsel as to these matters. O my children my children come hither, leave the house, come forth and with me greet and address your father, and at the same time with your mother be reconciled from your former enmity with your friends. For there is a truce between us and wrath has given place. Take hold of his right hand. Woe is me for my grief! I think, indeed, on somewhat that is hidden. Will ye then, O my children, live a long time thus to stretch forth your dear arms? Wretched that I am, how tearful I am and full of fear: but by putting away, after so long a time, my variance with your father, I have filled this⁹ tender visage with tears.

CHOR. Through my eyes, also, has gushed a gentle

⁶ 880. οὐκ εἰσὶ μὲν μοι παῖδες; οἶδα δὲ....φίλων. Have I not children already? and I know that etc.—P.

⁷ 884. σωθρονεῖν τ' ἐμοὶ P.

⁸ 890. χρῆν. P.

⁹ 905. τερπίνην—P. as if from τέρεινος.—Hermann would read τερπίνων (δακρύων sc.) not considering τέρπεινα at all a becoming epithet for Medea's countenance.

tear : and oh that the mischief may not proceed farther than it is now !

JAS. I praise, lady, the present, for I do not blame even thy former actions. For it is but reasonable that [one of the] female sex should indulge anger against her husband if he be secretly trafficking¹ in wedlock with another. But thy heart has gone over to the better side, and thou hast learned, although in time, the counsel that must prevail. These are the actions of a sensible woman. But for you, my children, not without care hath your father, with the blessing of the gods, taken great forethought for your welfare. For I deem that you, with your brothers, will yet be the first in this land of Corinth. But do ye wax strong : and all else your father is effecting for you, and of the gods whosoever is propitious. And may I behold you well nurtured, arrived at the prime of youth, victorious over my foes.—But thou, wherefore bedewest thou thine eyeballs with gentle tears, turning away thy fair neck, and receivest not these words of mine with pleasure ?

MED. 'Tis nothing : I was in thought concerning these children.

JAS. Be of good courage then : for I will take good care of these.

MED. I will do so : in sooth, I will not distrust thy words : but a woman is a weak creature, and disposed to tears.

JAS. Why, then,² wretched woman, dost thou groan over these children ?

MED. I brought them forth ; and when thou wast praying that my children might live, a feeling of pity

¹ 910. παρεμπολῶντί γ'. P.

² 929. τί δῆτα λίαν τοῖςδ'—
P. Wherefore so excessively.

crept over me that it might not be so. But as to the reasons why thou hast come to speak with me, some have been already said, and the rest I will mention³ now. Since it seems good to the princes to send me forth from the land, and since for me also this is the best course, I know it well, that I should not dwell either in thy way or in the way of the rulers of the land, since I am deemed hostile to your house; I indeed will depart from this land in exile: but in order that thy children may be brought up by thine own hand, do thou entreat Creon that they be not exiled from the land.

JAS. I fear I shall not be able⁴ to persuade him; however, I must make the attempt.

MED. But do you, however, bid thy wife ask of her father that the children be not exiled from this land.

JAS. By all means. And indeed I imagine, too, that I shall persuade her; if, as I suppose, she is like the rest of her sex.

MED. And I too will take part with thee in this labour: for I will send her gifts, which far excel in splendour all that now are among mankind; I will send my children bearing a finely woven robe, and a chaplet⁵ worked of gold. But with all speed let one of the

³ 933. *μνησθήσομαι*. — *μεμνήσομαι*. P. “Hâc formâ hujus verbi, ab Homero etiam adhibitâ Il. x. 390. semper utuntur Tragici; illâ nunquam. Idem dici potest de *κληθήσομαι* et *κεκληθήσομαι*: sed *βληθήσομαι* et *βεβληθήσομαι* promiscue usurpant.” [as Eurip. Hec. 863. Ἀχαιοὺς εἰ διαβληθήσομαι and Heracl. 423.] But Matthiæ maintains that both are in use; *μεμνήσομαι* = recordabor, and

μνησθήσομαι = mentionem faciam.—(probante DIND.)

⁴ 941. *οὐκ οἶδ' ἄρ' εἰ....* P. This is a false emendation: for the construction then would be *οὐκ οἶδ' ἄρα εἰ πείσω*.—The construction as it stands is *οὐκ οἶδα εἰ πείσαιμι ἄν=οὐκ οἶδα εἰ πείσω=φόβος εἰ πείσω* (supr. 184)=vereor ut persuadeam.—EIMSL.

⁵ 949. *πλόκον*. D. *στέφος*. P.

attendants bring hither the array. She will be happy not in one point but in ten thousand ; both in having met with thee, a most valiant man, for the partner of her bed, and in having acquired an adornment which in old time the Sun, the sire of my sire, gave to his progeny. Take these bridal gifts, my children, in your hands, and bear them and present them to the happy royal bride ; in sooth no despicable gifts will she receive.

JAS. But wherefore, O foolish woman, dost thou deprive thyself of these ? Deemest thou that the house of the king lacks raiment, or deemest thou it lacks gold ? Keep these presents, give them not away. For if as I deem my wife holds me in any account, she will prefer me to wealth, I know it well.

MED. Tell not me : there is a saying, that⁶ “ gifts can persuade even gods ; ” and gold is mightier among mortals than ten thousand words. Hers is the favour of heaven, her fortune now the god exalteth, she is young in rule : but with my life would I exchange the exile of my children, not with gold only. But do you, my children, having entered the wealthy palace, supplicate your father’s new bride, yes,⁷ my mistress too, beseech her, that you be not exiled from the land, presenting her with this apparel : for this is most of all required, that she receive these gifts into her own hand. Go with all speed : and be ye messengers of good tidings to your mother, of the boon which she desires to obtain, having succeeded in your mission.

⁶ 964. δῶρα θεοῖς πείθει, δῶρ’ αἰδοίους βασιλῆας. Plat. Rep. III. 390 E. Ovid’s Art of Love, iii. 635. Munera, crede

mihī, capiunt hominesque deosque.

⁷ 970. δεσπότιν τ’ ἑμὴν, P.

CHOR. Now have I no longer any hope for the life of the children, no hope any longer: for already are they on the road to death. The bride will receive, wretch that she is, she will receive the baneful golden fillet; and she will herself place around her golden hair the adornment of Hades, taking it in her hands. And their beauty and divine radiance will beguile her to array herself in the robe⁸ and in the chaplet wrought of gold⁹: and soon she will be arraying herself for a bride among the dead. Into such toils will she fall, and such a deathful fate will she incur, a wretched woman: and destruction she will not elude. But thou, O wretched man, O unhappy bridegroom, seeker of the alliance of princes, unconsciously art¹ thou bringing on thy children impending destruction, and on thy bride a hateful death: wretch that thou art, how much of thy destiny art thou passing by!² But I proceed to bewail thy griefs, O wretched mother! thou, who art about to murder the children for the sake of the marriage bed forsaking which unlawfully, thy husband dwells with another partner of his couch.

PÆDAGOGUS.

My mistress, these thy children are excused from exile, and the royal bride has received thy presents graciously in her hands, and in that quarter there is peace for thy children.

MED. Ah!

⁸ 982. *πέπλων*. P. "And the beauty etc. of the robes."

⁹ 983. *χρυσότευκτόν τε στεφ.* *χρυσεότευκτον στεφ.* P.

¹ 991. Rather, according to Hermann's punctuation; unconscious of their impending

destruction, thou art bringing upon thy children and thy bride a hateful death.

² Elmsley, after Portus, How art thou fallen from thy former happiness!

PÆD. Why standest thou thus troubled when thou art in good fortune?³

MED. Woe! woe!

PÆD. These laments are not in harmony with the news I have brought.

MED. Alas! and again alas!

PÆD. Can it be that without knowing it I am announcing some calamity, and have I failed in being a messenger of good tidings?

MED. Thou hast brought such tidings as thou hast brought; *thee* I blame not.

PÆD. Wherefore then standest thou with downcast visage, and pourest forth tears?

MED. Great necessity compels me, old man: for the gods and I in my madness have contrived these devices.

PÆD. Take courage: in sooth thou wilt even yet return home through the means of thy children.

MED. Others shall I send to their home first—wretch that I am!

PÆD. In sooth thou art not the only woman who has been separated from her children.—It becomes one who is a mortal to bear misfortunes patiently.

MED. I will do so. But go thou within the house, and provide for the children what is necessary for the day. O my children, my children, you indeed have now a country, and a home in which deserting me wretched ye will dwell, deprived for ever of your mother! But I must straightway go forth to another land an outcast, before I have the enjoyment of your presence and behold

³ After line 1005, some editions have, "Why turnest thou away thy cheek, and receivest

not these words of mine with pleasure."

you prosperous, before I have bedecked your couches and your wives and your marriage beds, and have ⁴held the torches on high. O wretch that I am, for my stubborn pride! In vain then my children did I rear you, and in vain did I suffer toils and was worn out with labour, enduring cruel pangs in childbirth. Verily there was once a time when I wretched entertained many a hope in you; that you would cherish me in mine old age, and when I was dead would lay me out decently with your hands, a thing enviable among mankind; but now that sweet thought indeed hath perished. For deprived of you, I shall pass a life grievous and painful to me: and ye will not any longer look on your mother with your fond eyes, when ye have passed over to another state of life. Alas, alas! wherefore look ye on me with your eyes, my children? Wherefore smile ye on me your last smile? Woe, woe! what am I to do? for my heart is sinking, O women, since I have looked on the joyous faces of my children. I shall not have strength to do it. Farewell, my former plans; I will carry my children out of the land. Why must I, paining the father of these children with evil done to them, incur myself twice as great misery? Not I in sooth—I will not. Farewell my plans! And yet, what am I about? Do I wish to afford ridicule by letting my foes go unpunished? Dare it, I must. But what cowardice ⁵of mine is this, to suggest to my thoughts words of pity! Begone, my children, into the house: and whosoever he be to whom it is unlawful to be present at my sacrifice,

⁴ 1027. ἀνασχέθειν. P. as though inf. pres. of ἀνασχέθω. melius ἀνασχέθειν, lengthened form Inf. 2. Aor. of ἀνέχω. cf. Elmsl. et Herm. ad loc.

⁵ 1051. κάκης=Latin vocative: or, it is the part of, &c.

—let him look to it : but I will not slacken my hand.
Ah, ah !

Do not thou then my heart, do not thou at least do this ! let them alone, wretched one, spare thy children ! In another land living with us they will gladden thee.—But no, by the avenging fiends that dwell below with Hades, never shall this be so, that I will give over my children for their foes to insult over.⁶

At any rate their fate is sealed, and they shall not escape it. And even now the chaplet is upon her head, and the royal bride is perishing in her robes, I know full well. But, since I am now going on a most woeful errand, and am about to send these, one yet more woeful, I would address my children. Give me, my children, give your mother your right hands to embrace. O dearest hand and lips⁷ most dear to me, and noble form and visage of my children, may ye be happy⁸—but *there*⁹ : for happiness here your sire hath robbed you of. O kiss so sweet, O skin so soft, and breath most fragrant, of my children ! Go, go ; I can no longer bear to look upon you, but am vanquished by my miseries. And indeed I know how evil are the deeds I am about to perpetrate : but passion is stronger than my resolves, which is the cause of greatest woes to mortals.

CHORUS.

Many a time ere now have I gone through subtler reasonings, and joined in greater contests than it becomes

⁶ After line 1061, some editions have, “ At all events it is necessary that they die ; and since they *must* die, I will slay them, *I* who brought them forth.”

⁷ 1071. *σῶμα. κάρα.* P.

⁸ 1073. *εὐδαιμονοῦτον*—*εὐ-*

δαιμονοῖσιν. Elmsl.—adopted in Scholefield’s edition of Porson. “ *Secundam personam dualem a tertiâ diversam non fuisse, primus, ni fallor, monui ad Aristoph. Ach. 733.*” Elmsl.

⁹ *Ibid.* *ἐκεῖ*, i. e. in Hades : *ἐνθάδε*, i. e. on earth.

the race of woman to seek into : for certainly there is a muse too among us, who dwells with us to teach us wisdom : not indeed among all women : for few in truth among many are the race of women which perchance thou mightest discover, not¹ also averse to wisdom. And I assert that whoever of mortals are wholly untried and have never begotten children, excel in happiness those who have been parents. Those on the one hand who are² childless, from ignorance whether children be a pleasure or a trouble to mortals, never having had them, are kept off from many a toil. But those in whose house is springing up a sweet progeny of children, I see wasting away with anxiety the livelong time : first indeed, how they shall bring up their children well, then how they shall leave them means of subsistence : and again after these anxieties, still it is uncertain whether they be toiling for the worthless or the good. And one evil, the last of all that befall mortals, I will now declare : For even grant that they have acquired a competency and a means of support, and that their children have grown³ up to manhood and have turned out a goodly race : yet if this fate⁴ be theirs, death vanishes with them into Hades bearing off the lives of their children. How then can it profit mortals that, for the sake of having children, the gods in addition to all other evils should still inflict this most distressing grief upon them ?

MED. My friends, it is now long since awaiting the

¹ 1089. οὐκ ἀπόμουνον P. But παῦρον κοῦκ ἀπόμ. as πολλά καὶ μεγάλα.—Elmsl.
παῦρον δὲ γένος (μίαν ἐν
πολλαῖς
εὐροις ἀνΐσως)
οὐκ ἀπόμουνον.—Elmsl.

Verissima mihi nunc videtur emendatio Elmsleii.—DIND.

² 1094. οἱ μὲν γ' ἄτεκνοι. P. those, at least, who,—

³ 1108. σώματά θ' ἥβην εἰσῆλθε τέκνων. P.

⁴ 1109. κυρήσει. P.

event I have been in anxious expectation as to affairs in that quarter, how they will turn out. And even now I see advancing hither one of the attendants of Jason : and his agitated breathing shows that he is about to announce some new calamity.

MESSANGER. O Medea, thou who hast wrought a fearful and a ⁵ lawless deed, flee, flee, and leave ⁶ behind thee neither an ocean car nor chariot that traverses the plain.

MED. But what event has occurred to me, to demand this flight?

MESS. The royal damsel hath but just perished, she and Creon who begat her, by thy poisons.

MED. Most welcome news hast thou spoken ; and from this time henceforth thou shalt be in the number of my benefactors and my friends.

MESS. What sayest thou ? art thou in thy right senses and not mad, lady, thou who joyest to hear that the royal household has been ⁷ outraged, and fearest not such deeds ?

MED. I too have somewhat to answer to thy words at least. But be not hasty, my friend ; but tell me how they perished ; for twice as great joy wouldst thou give me, if they died in utter misery.

MESS. When thy twofold progeny had arrived with their father and had entered the bridal halls, we rejoiced,

⁵ 1121. παράνομόν τ'. παρνόμως P. thou who hast lawlessly, &c.

⁶ 1122. λιποῦσα—Nobis, si vitio caret locus, hyperbolicè videtur loqui nuncius : “*fuge, nec navi ullâ nec curru relicto,*” quo ne quis persequi te possit.—Herm. But λιποῦσα hoc

sensu dicit, “nullâ quâ potiri potes effugiendi opportunitate omissâ :” i. e. neglecting neither.—Dind. and Matth.

⁷ 1130. ἡκισμένη P. thou who, having outraged the royal household, i. e. hearth of princes, joyest at hearing it.

we slaves who were grieving for thy woes ; and straightway much whispering passed from ear to ear, that thou and thy husband had reconciled your former strife. And one kisses the hand and another the golden hair of the children ; and I myself too from delight accompanied thy children into the women's apartments. And the mistress whom now we reverence in place of thee, before indeed she saw thy two children, kept her eye fixed eagerly upon Jason : but then, however, she veiled her eyes, and turned away her fair cheek, being annoyed at the entrance of the children : but thy husband tried to appease the passion and the anger of the damsel, saying these words : Be not hostile to thy friends, but cease from thy wrath, and turn back again thy head, accounting those friends whom thy husband so accounts ; and receive the presents and entreat thy father to remit the penalty of exile to these children, for my sake. And when she looked on the apparel, she held out no longer, but assented in everything to her husband : and before their father and thy children were far from the palace, she took the embroidered robes and put them on, and placing the golden chaplet around her ringlets, she arranges her hair by a glittering mirror, smiling at the lifeless image of her form. And then rising from her seat she passes through the house, treading delicately, with snow-white foot, exulting in the gifts, and ever and anon glancing from her eyes upon her advanced instep. But after that however there was a fearful sight to see. For changing colour she staggers back sidelong trembling in every limb, and hardly succeeds in throwing herself upon her seat before falling to the ground : and some old woman of her attendants fancying, I suppose, that sudden terror from Pan or some other god had

fallen upon her, raised a cry of prayer, until at least she saw the white foam, running down⁸ from her mouth, and saw her rolling⁹ the balls of her eyes, and that there was no blood in her complexion. Then she sent forth a mighty wail responsive to the cry of supplication: and straightway one rushed to the palace of the father, and another to the newly married husband, to tell the calamity which had befallen the bride: and the whole house resounds with the din of frequent footsteps. And by this time a quick runner stretching his¹ limbs would have been touching the goal of a course six plethra long; when she, from silence² and from eyes fast closed, with fearful groans, she the wretched one awoke: for a two-fold woe was advancing against her. In the first place, the golden chaplet that lay upon her head sends forth a wondrous stream of all-devouring fire; and the fine-spun robes, the gifts of thy children, were devouring the white flesh of the ill-fated one. Then leaping from her seat she flies, all in flames, shaking her locks and her head to one side and another, striving to cast off the chaplet: but the gold kept the headband fast, and the fire, when-e'er she shook her locks, blazed forth the more and twice as furiously: and she falls to the ground, vanquished by her evil fate, hardly to be recognised when seen, save by her sire alone. For neither was the expression of her

⁸ 1173. διὰ στόμα, P. "oozing through her lips."

⁹ 1174. ἄπο. P. and Elmsl. "Nos quidem, ut alibi demonstravimus, nihil putamus certius esse quam præpositiones per se non esse oxytonas, ideoque, ubi aut post nomen, ad quod pertinent aut ante nomen quidem sed cum sin-

gulari quâdam vi, aut pro adverbis, aut, quod eodem redit, in tmesi ponantur, retinere naturalem accentum suum, qui in disyllabis est inpenult. — HERM.

¹ 1181. ἀνέλκων. P. κῶλον = pedem, crus. — ELMSL.

1182. ἂν ἤπτετο P.

² 1183. lit. ἐξ. ἀναύδης ὄμμα-τος from silent eye.

eyes visible, nor her comely visage, but blood was dripping from the crown of her head, blood mingled with fire, and the flesh was peeling off from her bones like the tears that ooze from the fir-tree, with the unseen gnawings of poison, a fearful sight. And on all there was a fear of touching the dead body ; for we had her fate as a warning. But the wretched father suddenly approaching the house, in ignorance of the mischance, throws himself upon the corpse ; and straightway he wailed aloud, and embracing the body he kissed it, addressing it in such words as these : “ O my ill-fated child, which of the gods has thus unworthily destroyed thee ? Who is it that makes the old man verging on the grave to be bereaved of thee ? Woe is me, oh that I might die with thee, my child ! But when he had ceased from his lamentations and wailings, wishing to raise up his aged body, he kept clinging to the finely spun robes like ivy to the branches of the laurel, and fearful strugglings were there : for he was striving to raise his knee from the ground, but she was holding him back ; and when any one strove to drag him off by force, he tore the aged flesh from his bones. But in time the fire of life was extinguished, and the wretched man breathed out his soul ; for no longer could he support his misery. And they lie corpses, the daughter and the aged sire, side by side ; a misery worthy to be regretted with tears. But let thy concerns form no part of the account ; for thou wilt thyself discover a refuge from the penalty of guilt : but not for the first time now do I deem the affairs of mortal men to be but a shadow, nor should I be afraid to say that those among men who are deemed to be wise and subtle reasoners, deserve the imputation of the greatest folly ; for of mortals there is not one who is a

happy man [happy by nature P.]: yet if wealth flow in upon him, one man might become more fortunate than another, but happy would he be never.

CHORUS. In this same day, methinks, the god is about to bring many evils in just retribution upon Jason. O ill-fated daughter of Creon, how do we bewail thy evil fate, thou who hast gone to the halls [gates P.] of Hades, by reason of thy nuptials with Jason.

MED. My friends, this deed is fixed, that with all speed I slay my children and then fly this land; and not by delay give up my offspring for a more hostile hand to murder.³ It is absolutely necessary that they die: and since it is fated, I will slay them, I who brought them forth. But come, arm thee, my heart; wherefore do I hesitate⁴ to do these deeds of evil, fearful yet necessary? Come, O my wretched hand, grasp thou the sword, grasp it. On⁵ to the starting point of a life of pain; and play not the coward, nor even have remembrance of thy children, how dear they are to thee, that thou art their mother: but for this short day at least forget thy children, and afterward lament: for even though thou slay them, nevertheless they were dear to me, and I am an ill-fated woman.

CHOR. O Earth and thou all brilliant beam of the Sun, look down, look on this wretched woman, before she raise against her children her ensanguined hand, slayer of its own flesh: for from thy⁶ golden seed are

³ 1240-1. om. P.

⁴ 1243. *μη πράσσειν*. Elmsleius legit *μη οὐ*, probante Matthiæo: quod necessarium esse vix credo: *μη πράσσειν* est ὥστε *μη πράσσειν*.—Scholefield.

⁵ 1245. *βαλβίδα* = πρὸς ἀγῶνα.—Elmsl. *βαλβίς* limen significat: vide ad Antig. Soph. 131.—Herm.

⁶ 1255. *τᾶς* om. P.

they sprung, and there is fear⁷ for the blood of gods, that it fall by the hands of men. But do thou, O heaven-born light restrain her, stay her hand, take forth from her house the wretched murderous fury, excited by avenging fiends.⁸ Fruitless⁹ then perishes the toil thou hast endured for thy children; fruitlessly, then, hast thou borne thy loved progeny, O thou that hast left that most inhospitable entrance between the dark clashing rocks. O miserable woman, wherefore does the wrath of thy soul fall so heavily upon thee, and why is hostile slaughter successively renewed? For the pollutions of kindred blood when it falls to the earth is a woeful thing to mortals, they are curses from the god upon the house of the murderer, curses in accordance [with the crime].

1ST. CHILD. Woe is me, what shall I do? Whither may I escape the hands of my mother?

2D. CHILD. I know not, my dearest brother, for we perish!

CHOR. Hearest thou the cry, hearest thou the cry of the children? O wretched one, O ill-fated woman! Shall I enter the house? I deem it right to rescue the children from murder.

CHILDREN. Yea, in the name of the Gods, rescue us;

⁷ 1256. αἵματι. αἷμα. P. "It is a fearful thing for the blood of Gods to fall."

⁸ 1260. ὕπ' ἀλαστόρων. Hæc verba alii aliter explicant. Elmsl. This singularly satisfactory announcement is not followed by any specimen of the explanations given, except that of the Scholiast, viz.:

ἔξελε.... ὕπ' = ὕπ' ἐξελε. If so, ἀλαστόρων must be taken with οἴκων as an adjective "the house haunted by fiends" as in Soph. Ant. 974. and Æsch. Fr. 416.—Again; οἴκων may be taken as dependent on Ἐρινύν—"Fury of her house."

⁹ 1262. ἄρα. P.

for 'twill be in the hour of need ; since even now we are nearly fallen into the toils of the sword.

CHOR. O wretched woman, surely thou must have been of rock or of iron, thou who wilt slay with thine own hand the seed thou didst thyself bring forth. One woman in truth I have heard of, one woman of all before thee who raised her hand against her dear children, Ino, maddened by the gods, when the wife of Jove drove her forth in distraction from her house, and the wretched one on account of the impious murder of her children casts herself into the surge, extending her foot beyond the ocean cliff, and there she perishes, dying with her two dead children. What fearful deed then could still remain to be done ? O thou nuptial bed of women fraught with toils, what great evils hast thou already inflicted upon mortals !

JASON. Ladies, ye who stand near this house, can it be that Medea, who has perpetrated these fearful deeds, is still in these halls, or has she departed in flight ? For¹ she must either be hidden beneath the earth, or have winged her flight into the expanse of air, if she will escape giving satisfaction to the house of the king. Trusts she that having slain the princes of the land, she will herself escape² unpunished from these walls ? But since I care not for her as for my offspring, on her indeed they will inflict evil on whom she has inflicted it : but I have come to save the lives of my children, that the

¹ 1296. *νιν*.—*νυν*. P. This emendation is to avoid the tautology of *νιν* and *σφε* in the same line: as Elmsl. for *σφε* proposes *γέ* : but Hermann defends the vulgar reading.

² 1300. *ἀθῶος*. *ἀθῶος*. P. But *ἀθῶος* (from *θωή*) would be accented *ἄθωος*. If written with the circumflex, the word is from *θωῖή* whence *ἀθῶιος* = *ἀθῶος*. cf. Elmsl.

relations of the dead do them no injury, exacting vengeance for the impious murder committed by their mother.

CHOR. O wretched man, thou knowest not to what a pitch of misery thou hast come, Jason; for so never wouldst thou have uttered these words.

JASON. What is it then? Can it be that she wishes to slay me also?

CHOR. Thy children are dead by their mother's hand.

JAS. Woe is me, what wilt thou tell me? how thou hast destroyed me, woman!

CHOR. Lay thy plans henceforth under the assurance that thy children are no more.

JAS. But where did she slay them, without or within the house?

CHOR. Having opened the gates thou wilt behold the slaughter of thy children.

JAS. Undo the bolts with all haste, my attendants, loosen the fastenings, that I may behold a twofold curse; that I may look upon the dead, and avenge myself on her by her blood.

MED. ³Wherefore shakest and forcest thou these gates, searching for the corpses, and for me who have done the deed? Cease from this toil. But if thou hast need of me, say what thou desirest, but never shalt thou touch me with thy hand. Such a chariot hath the sun, sire of my sire, given to me, a tower of defence against the hand of an enemy.

³ 1317. Porson is of opinion that the original copy had "τί τοῦσδε κινεῖς κἀναμοχλεύεις λόγους; "Wherefore dost thou agitate and heave up these words?" and that

Euripides being quizzed for his harsh metaphor—Aristoph. Nubes, 1399. ὦ καινῶν ἐπῶν κινητὰ καὶ μοχλευτὰ—altered it to the present text.

JAS. O thou detested thing, thou woman most hateful to the gods and to me and to the whole race of men ! thou who, a mother, couldst endure to imbue a sword in the blood of thy children, and hast made me childless and wretched ; and yet, having done these deeds thou lookest in the face of both sun and earth, thou who hast dared a most unholy deed. Mayest thou perish ! But I now am wise, not being wise then when from thy home and from a barbarian land I led thee to a Grecian home, thee a mighty curse, the betrayer of thy sire and of the land that supported thee. But thy evil genius the gods have launched upon me ; for it was after having slain thine own brother, who shared with thee the same hearth, that thou didst embark in the ship *Argo* with beauteous prow ; from such deeds didst thou commence, and then, when made my wife, and when thou hadst borne me children, for the sake of thy bed and thy nuptial couch thou hast slain them. There is no woman of Greece who would ever have endured to do this deed, not one of those before whom I consented to marry thee, an alliance hateful to me and deathful, thee a lioness, not a woman, with a nature more savage than the *Tyrrhenian Scylla*. But not with ten thousand reproaches could I sting thee, such daring was born in thee : mayst thou go to perdition, perpetrator of shameless deeds and polluted with the blood of thy children ! But for me it is left to bewail my evil fate, I who shall neither enjoy the nuptial bed of my new bride, nor shall I be able to address my children alive whom I begot and nurtured, for I have lost them altogether.

MED. I would have spoken at length in answer to these words, did not our father *Jove* know what thou hast received at my hand and what deeds thou hast

done to me; but thou wast mistaken, when thou expectedst after having scorned my marriage bed to lead a life of pleasure deriding me, nor was the princess nor he who plighted her to thee in marriage, Creon, likely to cast me out from this land, unpunished. In reply to these deeds, call me both a lioness, if thou wilt, and Scylla, who inhabited the Tyrrhenian plain; for, as I ought, I have reached thy heart.

JAS. Yea, but thou thyself also sufferest pain and art partaker of my misery.

MED. Be sure of that: but even⁴ suffering answers its purpose, if thou deride me not.

JAS. O mine offspring, how evil a mother have ye met with!

MED. O my children, how have ye perished by the wickedness of your father!

JAS. In sooth 'twas not my right hand at least that slew them.⁵

MED. No: but 'twas thine insolence and thy newly contracted marriage.

JAS. And for the sake of thy marriage bed didst thou deem it just to slay them?

MED. And deemest thou that this loss is a trifling misery to a woman?

JAS. Aye, to one who is chaste: but thou hast all evil passions.

MED. These children no longer live: this I know will sting thee.

JAS. They live, woe is me! avengers upon thy head.

⁴ 1362. *λύει. λυσιτελεῖ.*
Sch. and Matth. "melior
tamen mihi videtur Porsoni
sententia qui *λύει* hic "minuit"

vel "levat" significare putat.—
Elmsl.

⁵ 1365. *οὐ τοίνυν ἡμῇ δεξιᾷ
σφ' ἀπώλεσεν* P. nevertheless
'twas not &c.

MED. The gods know who began the wrong.

JAS. They know in truth thine abominable soul.

MED. Loathe me ; but thy bitter speech I detest.

JAS. And verily I do thine : but the separation is easy.

MED. How then ? What shall I do ? for I also greatly wish it.

JAS. Permit me to bury these corpses and to mourn over them.

MED. Not I in sooth : for with these hands I will bury them myself, bearing them to the sacred precinct of Juno, goddess of the height ; so that no one of their foes may insult over them, digging up their graves. But in this land of Sisyphus I will institute a holy festival and sacred mysteries henceforward, in expiation of this unholy slaughter. But I myself am about to go to the land of Erechtheus, to dwell with Ægeus, the son of Pandion : and thou, as is but right, shalt die a wretch miserably, being struck on the head with a fragment of the Argo, having seen bitter issue of thy marriage with me.

JAS. But may the fury of thy children and red-handed Justice destroy thee.

MED. But what god or what hero listens to thee, the perjurer, the deceiver of strangers ?

JAS. Ah, thou execrable wretch and murderer of thy children !

MED. Begone to thy house, and bury thy bride.

JAS. I go, bereft of my two children.

MED. Thou wailest not yet : wait till thine old age.⁶

JAS. O my children most beloved.

⁶ 1396. γήρασκ' P. wait and grow old.

MED. Aye, by their mother, but not by thee.

JAS. If so, why didst thou slay them?

MED. To bring thee to ruin to be sure.

JAS. Alas ! alas ! I long to cling to the dear lips of my children, wretch that I am !

MED. Now thou addressest them, now thou salutes them ; but then thou didst thrust them aside.

JAS. Grant me by the gods to touch the soft flesh of my children.

MED. It cannot be : thy words are wasted in vain.

JAS. O Jove, hearest thou this ? How I am repelled, and what wrongs I suffer at the hand of this polluted lioness, this slayer of her children ? But however, so much as is left me and is in my power, I both bewail them and offer supplications ! Calling the gods to witness, how thou hast slain my children, and forbiddest me to touch them with my hands and to bury their bodies ; those whom never ought I, who begat them, to have beheld slaughtered by thy hand.

CHORUS.

Jove in Olympus is the dispenser of many fortunes to mortals, and many events do the gods bring to pass contrary to expectation : and what seemed likely has not been accomplished, and for what seemed unlikely the god hath found out a way : and to such a conclusion hath this matter arrived.

PHŒNISSÆ.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JOCASTA.

PÆDAGOGUS.

ANTIGONE.

CHORUS OF PHŒNICIAN WOMEN.

POLYNICES.

ETEOCLES.

CREON.

MENŒCEUS.

TEIRESIAS.

MESSENGER.

SECOND MESSENGER.

ŒDIPUS.

ARGUMENT.¹

ETEOCLES having received the kingdom of Thebes deprives his brother Polynices of his share ; and he being exiled having arrived at Argos married the daughter of the king, Adrastus. And being ambitious of returning to his country and having persuaded his father-in-law, he collected a sufficient force against his brother and marched against Thebes. And his mother Jocasta persuaded him to come into the city under a truce, and first to have a conference with his brother about the government. But as Eteocles acted with great haughtiness, in consequence of possessing the sovereign power, Jocasta indeed was unable to bring her children to friendly terms ; and Polynices retired from the city to draw² up his army as against an enemy. But Teiresias prophesied that those of the city would be victorious if Menœceus the son of Creon should be offered as a sacrifice to Ares. Creon, however, refused to give up his son to the state ; but the young man desired it, and though his father gave him means of flight with money, he slew himself. And the Thebans slew the chieftains of the Argives. And Eteocles and Polynices killed each other in single combat. Their mother then having found her two sons dead, slew herself : and her brother Creon succeeded to the throne. And the Argives having been worsted in the battle retreated. And Creon, being very indignant, gave not up to burial those of the enemy who had fallen under the walls of Thebes, and cast out Polynices without

¹ This play was acted probably Ol. 91. 3. (B.C. 414), or between that date and 93. 3. (B.C. 406.)—DIND.

² παρατάξιμος.—παρατάξιμος. P. The latter is so far more conformable to the sense that it has been adopted.

funeral rites, and banished Œdipus in exile from his country : in the latter instance not regarding the laws of men, and in the former, consulting his passion, and not feeling compassion in proportion to the calamity.



ANOTHER ARGUMENT.

WHEN Europa had been carried off by Jove in the form of a bull and had been carried over the sea from Phœnicia to Crete, her father Agenor sent his son Cadmus to seek for the damsel, bidding him, if he did not find her and bring her home, neither himself to return home any more. And Cadmus, not knowing how he should act, found but one solution of his difficulty, in betaking himself to Apollo, and learning from him what he must do. Having arrived then at Delphi he inquired of the god concerning his sister. And he gives him indeed no response concerning Europa, but tells him to go forth thence, and having followed a cow to the spot where she should lie down, there also to found a city. And he obeying the oracle, gave up his return to his native country, and having by chance found a cow he made her the guide of his way. And when she had come to the spot where Thebes now stands and there suddenly lay down, he both perceived that the oracle was accomplished, and there founded a city with seven gates, called Thebes,³ after the hundred gated Thebes in Ægypt ; employing Amphion the musician as one skilled in architecture and a cunning workman : for they say that he, by striking up a tune bewitched the stones with his melody, and by their placing themselves one upon another, he produced the walls : and that the city has seven gates, because also the notes of his lyre were seven. And the mythical story is as above : but it has been invented by

³ ὁμώνυμος seems to be used here for ἐπώνυμος.

reason of the walls having been made to harmonize accurately with one another ; for harmony is a property of music.

Cadmus then having married Harmonia the daughter of Aphroditè and Mars, begat Polydorus, and he Labdacus and he Laius. This man having gone on a time to Elis, and having seen Chrysippus the son of Pelops, (who was born to him by another wife and not Hippodameia the daughter of Ænomaus) and being seized with a violent passion for him, carried him off by force to Thebes. And he had ununatural connexion with him, being the first among men to discover unnatural crime, just as Jove also among the gods, who carried off Ganymedes. And Pelops having learned this invoked a curse upon Laius, that he might never beget a child ; or if ever it should so happen, that he might fall by his hand. For this reason Laius being now for a long time childless goes to the Pythia and asks for a race of children. And he hears a response to this effect.

“Laius, thou son of Labdacus, thou askest for a prosperous race of children. Thou shalt indeed beget a dear son, but this shall be thy fate, to lose thy life by the hands of thine own child. For so hath Jove confirmed it, having consented to the hateful imprecations of Pelops whose dear son thou didst carry away ; and he invoked against thee all these curses.”

Which oracle Laius having as it were forgotten in desire for his wife Jocasta and his sensual gratification, or, as some say, being one day intoxicated with wine and having had intercourse with his wife, he begets Œdipus. And after his birth Laius, pondering over the oracle, and becoming alarmed, having bored a hole through his feet and fastened rings of gold through them, exposes him, by means of the herdsmen of his household, on mount Cithæron ; as being likely to be there devoured by wild beasts. But it happened at the same time that the herdsmen of Polybus king of Corinth were also feeding their cattle there : who also having found the infant and having taken it up bear it to Merope the wife of Polybus. For she suffered the misfortune of barrenness ; and by some means she persuades her husband that she was herself the mother of this infant. And when the child had grown to manhood, and had quarrelled with some one there, as indeed often happens, he was insulted by him with the assertion that he was not the son of Polybus. Wherefore he rose up and

journeyed to Apollo, to inquire concerning this matter. And he learns that he is to be the murderer of his father and that he will lie with his mother, this only : but who his parents might be he does not learn for certain. And on his way back from thence he met Laius, himself also journeying to Apollo to discover concerning the child who had been exposed, whether he was dead. And the attendant of Laius bids him make way a little for the king. But Œdipus being possessed with haughtiness, and in no way putting up with this, slays both the attendant and with him his master, not knowing that he had become a parricide, and one only of the followers of Laius having escaped, who indeed afterwards disclosed the murder, as Sophocles says in the *Œdipus Tyrannus*. Then therefore Œdipus having taken the horses of Laius and all he had, returns to Corinth, and giving all these things to Polybus in return for bringing him up, he goes forth from thence, fearing the oracle concerning his slaying his father and lying with his mother. For he supposed that Polybus and his wife were his parents. And he arrives at Thebes ; which city was at that time vexed by the Sphinx, by her both chanting oracles and carrying off any one of the citizens she chose and destroying him, because they could not understand the oracles pronounced by her. But it was Mars who brought her upon the Thebans, avenging himself on them for the death of his offspring the dragon ; whom Cadmus slew, and sowed his teeth, from which sprung up the Giants. And the Sphinx was a monster having the face of a virgin but the breast and the paws and the feet and the claws of a lion, and the tail of a serpent, and the wings of a bird, with which she flew. And she happened at that time to have propounded to the Thebans a riddle to this effect, as Asclepiades records it ;

“ There is a thing upon the earth having two feet, and four feet and three feet, whose voice is one. And it alone changes its form of all things that move, creeping upon the earth, or soaring in the air, or in the deep. But whenever it goes on the greater number of feet, then is there feebler vigour in its limbs.”

Which being uninterpreted, Creon the brother of Jocasta the queen proclaimed by a herald that whoever could find out the riddle, to him would he unite his sister. And Œdipus, who, as we said, was living there at the time, having heard the proclamation, both

solves the riddle of the Sphinx and, without knowing it, takes his mother to wife. But he solved it thus, as they say ;

Hearken, though reluctantly, Muse of the dead, bird of evil wing, hearken to my voice, the end of thy wickedness. Thou hast described man ; who when he crawls upon earth, is born at first four-footed, an infant from the womb ; but when an old man, he leans upon a staff, a third foot, supporting his neck, being bowed down with old age.

But the Sphinx having heard the solution straightway destroys herself, by letting herself fall from aloft in the air. And Œdipus having lived with his mother, and begotten four children on her, (male children, indeed, Eteocles and Polynices, and females, Antigone and Ismene), when he discovered afterwards his incest, blinded himself. And Eteocles and Polynices, wishing in some way to suppress the reproach, shut him up in a small chamber where, being seen by no one, he might pass into oblivion, as far as concerned that matter. And he being vehemently angered imprecates upon them a curse, that they may divide the kingdom with the sword. They then, fearing their father's imprecations, contrive a plan to this effect ; that they should hold the government one at a time, and that the one should give place to the other in it. Eteocles therefore, as being the first-born of the brothers, was the first to take possession of the throne, and Polynices retired : and when a year had been accomplished, he came to his brother, demanding that he also should reign for a year. But Eteocles both refused to resign his power, and sent his brother away with disgrace. And he in his wanderings came to Argos, and having taken to wife the daughter of the king Adrastus, he persuades his kinsman to take part with him in the recovery of his kingdom. And having received from him a very large army, he marches against his brother. And how their mother, who wished to reconcile her children before the engagement, could not prevail ; and how Teiresias prophesied that if Menœceus the son of Creon would slay himself over the dragon's den, the Thebans would be victorious over the Argives ; and how these things came to pass, and the chieftains of the Argives fell, all except Adrastus ; and how Eteocles and Polynices, fighting in single combat with one another, were slain each by the other ; and how Jocasta hav-

ing come to them and found them dead slew herself with them ; and how Creon having obtained the government buries indeed Eteocles, but allowed Polynices to remain unburied, and drove Œdipus forth from the city ; all these things Euripides narrates in detail in this play. And the present drama is one of the most select, abounding as it does in sentiments and maxims, numerous and elegant and diversified, and in the best possible handling, and throughout very excellent, even if it has an improbability in the entrance of Polynices into Thebes. And it has received the name of the “ Phœnician Women” of Euripides from the chorus, in contradistinction to the “ Seven against Thebes” of Æschylus ; for he also makes use of this argument in the latter. But the virgins themselves the descendants of Agenor have sent from Phœnicia as an offering to Apollo ; and they on their way to Delphi, put in at Thebes, by reason of Cadmus also, as we said above, being from Phœnicia. And the war having overtaken them there they were compelled to remain until the conflict should cease.

PHŒNISSÆ.

JOCASTA.

1—18.]

O THOU who cleavest a path through the stars of heaven, mounted aloft on a chariot inlaid with gold, whirling onward the flame of day with thy swift coursers, O Sun! how ill-omened a beam didst thou shed upon Thebes on that day when Cadmus arrived at this land having left the maritime shore of Phœnicia; he who formerly having married Harmonia daughter of the Cyprian goddess, begat Polydorus; and from him they say that Labdacus was sprung, and from him Laïus. And I indeed am called the daughter of Menœceus, and my brother Creon was born from the same mother; but they name me Jocasta, for that name my father imposed upon me; and Laïus was my husband. But since he was childless, though for a long time having my bed in his house, he goes to enquire of Phœbus, and at the same time prays for a father's share with me in the offspring of male children for his house. But he answered, "O king of Thebes rejoicing in horses, sow not seed into a childbearing furrow in despite of the gods.

For if thou shalt beget a son, he who is born shall slay thee, and thy whole house shall perish in bloodshed." But he, giving himself up to pleasure and having become drunken, begat a child to me : and having begotten the infant, remembering his fault and the warning of the god, he gives the babe to his herdsmen to expose on the pastures of Hera, and the bare crag of Cithæron, having passed spikes of iron through the middle of his ankles, whence Hellas gave him the name of Œdipus. But the feeders of the horses and oxen of Polybus having taken him convey him home and placed him in the hands of their mistress. And she suckles at the breast the child of my throes, and persuades her husband that she was the mother. But when he was now arriving at manhood, with ruddy cheeks, my son either having discovered what had happened or having learned it from some one, set forth, wishing to learn who were his parents, to the temple of Phœbus : as also did my husband Laius, seeking to know concerning the child who had been exposed, whether he was no longer living. And they twain met on the same spot, where the Phocian road divides ; and the charioteer of Laius commands him, "O stranger, stand out of the way of princes ;" but he went on without a word, being very proud. And the horses wounded the insteps of his feet with their hoofs. After which, why need I tell what are beside my woes ? The son slays the father, and having taken his chariot gives them to Polybus who brought him up. And when the Sphynx was weighing down our city by her ravages, and my husband no longer lived, my brother Creon proclaims my bed publicly, that he will join me in marriage to him, whoever should interpret the riddle of the cunning virgin. And somehow my son Œdipus chances

to solve the riddle of the Sphinx,¹ wherefore he is appointed ruler of this country, and receives the sceptre of this land as his prize. And he marries her who brought him forth, the wretched man, not knowing it, neither himself nor his mother, that she was lying with her son. And I bear children to my child, two indeed sons, Eteocles and the renowned mighty Polyneices, and two daughters; the one indeed her father named Ismene, but the elder I called Antigone. And Œdipus,² he who has endured all woes, having discovered the bed he shared with me, of incestuous intercourse, inflicts a fearful deed of blood on his own eyes, by mangling the pupils with gold-wrought buckles. But when my children's cheeks grew dark with the beard, they concealed their father with bolted doors, that the mischance might fade from men's memory, a mischance that stood in need of many an artifice. And he is still living within the palace, but, frenzied with his misfortune, he invokes most unholy curses upon his children, that with the sharp sword they may divide the inheritance of this house. And they twain, becoming alarmed lest the gods should cause these prayers to be accomplished if they dwelt together, having come to terms agreed that Polyneices, the younger, should first go into voluntary exile from this country, and that Eteocles remaining behind should hold the sceptre of the land for a year, giving it up in his turn. But now that he is settled on the seat of government,³ he drives away Polyneices in exile from this land. And he having gone to Argos, having contracted with Adrastus an alliance by mar-

¹ 51. om. P.two bodies together, cross-beam; hence *seut*.² 60. om. P.³ 74. ζυγόν, that which joins

riage, having drawn together many a shield of Argive warriors, leads them on; and having marched up even to these seven-gated walls, he demands back the sceptre of his fathers, and his share of the land. But I, in order ⁴ to appease their strife, have persuaded one son to come in to the other, under a truce, before they lay hold on the spear. And the messenger who was sent, says that he will come. But O thou who inhabitest the glittering cloudelefts of heaven, O Jove! save us, and grant a reconciliation between my sons. For thou oughtest, if thou art wise, not to suffer the same among mortals always to be unfortunate.

PÆDAGOGUS.

O Antigone, renowned branch of the house of thy father, since thy mother hath permitted thee to leave the maiden's apartments as far as to the topmost chamber of the palace, that thou mayest see the Argive host at thy entreaty, stay, that I may first explore the road.⁵ Can there be any one of the citizens in the way? lest evil reproach should fall upon me as a slave, and upon thee as a princess. But I will tell thee all, for I know it, both what I saw and heard from the Argives, when bearing a truce to thy brother I went thither hence, and back again here from him. But no one of the citizens comes near this palace; pass forth from the ancient stairs of cedar-wood with your foot; and view the plains, and by the streams of Ismenus and the fountains of Dirce, how great is the host of the enemy.

ANTIGONE.

Stretch forth, then, stretch forth thine aged hand to

⁴ 81. λύουσ'. P.

⁵ 93.4. Duæ constructiones in unam conflatae sunt; μή (num) τις π. φαντάζεται et μή

τις π. φαντάζεται; hæc altera continuatur verbis κάμοι μὲν ἔλθῃ.—ΜΑΤΤΗ.

my youthful one, from the stairs, raising up the step of my foot.

PÆD. Here, grasp it, damsel, and thou hast arrived at the proper moment; for the Pelasgian host is just now in motion, and they are separating their companies from one another.

ANT. O Hecate, awful daughter of Latona! the whole plain gleams, as of brass.

PÆD. Aye, for with no mean force hath Polyneices come against the land; but clattering with many horses, indeed, and with innumerable arms.

ANT. Can it be that the gates are closely secured with bars, and the brass-bound fastenings of the wall with the stone-wrought engines of Amphion?

PÆD. Be of good courage; as regards its interior at least the city is secure. But look upon the foremost warrior, if thou desirest to know his name.

ANT. Who is this with the snowy plume, who in front of a host of men leads the way, brandishing a brazen shield upon his arm.

PÆD. A captain of a company, O lady.

ANT. Who he is, from whom descended, tell me, old man, what he is named.

PÆD. This man is called by race a Mycenæan, and he dwells by the waters of Lernè; King Hippomedon.

ANT. Oh, oh, how haughty, how terrible to look upon, like unto an earth-born giant, starlike in the engraving of his shield, and not resembling the race of short-lived mortals.

PÆD. Seest thou not this captain who is passing by the waters of Dirce?

ANT. A different, a different fashion of armour is this: who then is this?

PÆD. This is Tydeus, the son indeed of Æneus ; but he hath Ætolian Mars within his breast.

ANT. Is this the husband of the bride, old man, herself the sister of Polyneices ? How foreign-looking in his arms, half barbarian !

PÆD. Aye, for all the Ætolians are wielders of the buckler, my child, and with javelins are most expert marksmen.

ANT. But thou, old man, how dost thou perceive these things so clearly ?

PÆD. Having seen the devices on their shields I then examined them when I went to bear terms of truce to thy brother ; and having observed them, I know those clad in armour.

ANT. But who is this who is passing near the monument of Zethus, with long ringlets, stern of eye, a youth to look upon ? He is a captain ; ⁶for a multitude in full armour is following behind him.

PÆD. This is Parthenopæus, the son of Atalante.

ANT. But may Artemis who ranges the mountains with his mother, with her darts quell and slay him, who hath come against my city to destroy it !

PÆD. May it be so, my child. But with justice have they come against the land ; wherefore also I fear, lest the gods look upon it impartially.

ANT. But where is he who was born from the same mother as myself, with a fate of many woes ? O dearest old man, tell me, where is Polyneices ?

PÆD. He stands by the side of Adrastus near the

⁶ 148. ΠΑ. λοχαγός. ΑΝ. ὥς ὄχλος κ. τ. λ. P.—PÆD. He is a captain.—ΑΝΤ. How a crowd, etc. ! But according

to Dind. the punctuation should be, νεανίας, λοχαγός ; Who is this captain, etc. ? How a crowd, etc. !

tomb of the seven virgin daughters of Niobe. Seest thou?

ANT. I see in sooth not clearly, but in a manner I see the outline of his figure and the semblance of his bust. Oh that with my feet I might accomplish the course of a cloud swift as the wind, through the ether, to mine own brother! and fling mine arms about the beloved neck of him for so long a wretched exile! How conspicuous he is in his golden armour, old man, blazing like the eastern beams of the sun?

PÆD. He is coming to this palace, so as to fill thee with joy, under a truce.

ANT. But this one, old man, who is this, who is driving a chariot of white steeds, mounted aloft?

PÆD. This, O lady, is the prophet Amphiaraus: victims accompany him, libations⁷ for blood-loving earth.

ANT. O Moon, daughter of the bright-girdled sun, thou golden orb of light, how calmly and prudently he is directing his car, applying the goad to each steed in turn! But where is he who utters such fearful insolence against this city, Capaneus?

PÆD. There he is, calculating the approaches to the towers, measuring the walls from top to bottom.

ANT. O Nemesis, and deep-rolling thunders of Jove, and thou scorching fire of lightning, mayest thou, insooth, lay in the sleep of death overweening pride! This is he, who will give Theban women, captive by the spear, to Mycenæ and to the Lernæan trident, the waters of Poseidon Amymôn, having involved them in slavery. Never, never, O awful goddess, O Artemis, scion of Jove, with golden ringlets, may I endure this slavery.

⁷ 174. *ῥοαί*. P. "streams."

PÆD. O my child, enter the palace, and remain under the roof, within thy maiden apartments, since thou hast arrived at the gratification of thy desire of those things which thou didst desire to behold. For a crowd of women is advancing to the royal abode, since confusion has come into the city. But a censorious thing is the female sex, and if they get but small occasions for talking, they introduce more in addition; and it is a sort of pleasure for women to say no one wholesome word of one another.

CHORUS.

From the Tyrian wave have I come, first-fruits for Loxias, from the Phœnician⁸ island, a slave of the temple of Phœbus; that beneath the snow-beaten crags of Parnassus I might make my dwelling;⁹ having voyaged with the oar through the sea that¹ washes Ionia, since, over the sterile expanse that washes the shores of Sicily around, Zephyr rode on the gale, the softest murmur in the heavens; chosen forth from out of my city, as fairest gifts to Loxias. And I have come to the land of the Cadmeans, the renowned race of Agenor, having been conducted hither to the kindred towers of Laius. But like unto golden-wrought statues, I have become a servant to Phœbus. But still the water of Castalia awaits me, to² moisten my locks, an ornament to virgins in the service of Phœbus. O thou rock that lightest up the twin-peaked brilliancy of fire over the heights of Bac-

⁸ 204. Φ. νᾶσος, sc. Tyre.

⁹ 207. κατενάσθη, typothetæ errore legitur pro κατενάσθην. ἵνα κατενάσθην, 'ut habitarem.'—DIND.

¹ 208. Ἴόνιον κατὰ πόντον. Per Ionium mare non propriè

sic dictum sed quod Ioniam allueret.—VAILCK.

² 224. παρθένιον χλιδάν.—pro ὅ (sc. τὸ δεῦσαι κόμας) παρθένιος χλιδὴ ἐστι.—MATTH.

thus, and thou vine of Dionysus, who lettest fall day by day the fruitful cluster of the vine stock, putting it forth; and ye, divine caves of the serpent, and mountain watchtowers of the gods, and thou, sacred snow-beaten mountain. Oh that, wheeling the dance, I might become a chorus to the immortal goddess, free from alarms, by the dells sacred to Phœbus, in the centre of earth, having forsaken Dirce! But now, I ween, impetuous Mars having advanced before the walls is kindling hostile slaughter against this city,—but may it never come to pass! For the woes of friends are in common: and if any thing shall happen to this land of the seven towers, 'twill be shared by the country of Phœnicia. Alas, alas! common is our blood, of common lineage were born the children of horn-bearing Io: and in their woes I have a part. But around the city a thick cloud of shields is gleaming, the array of bloody conflict, a conflict which Mars speedily will experience, who brings upon the sons of Œdipus the woe of avenging Furies. O Pelasgian Argos, I fear thy might and the power of the gods; for no unjust contest is this into which thou art rushing in arms, and which is visiting this house.

POL. The bars indeed of the gate-wardens admitted me readily, to come within the walls. For which very reason I fear lest having caught me within their toils, they will not let my person out unstained with blood. Wherefore I must turn my eyes in every direction, both to this side and that, lest there be some treachery. But as I have my hand armed with this sword, I will give myself the confidence of courage. Ha! Who is that? Or is it merely a noise I fear? For every thing appears formidable to those who dare dangerous deeds, when the

foot is passing through a hostile land. However, I put trust in my mother, and at the same time I trust her not, she who has persuaded me to come hither under truce. But succour is at hand; for the hearths of altars are near and the house is not deserted. Come, let me put away my sword into the darkness of its sheath, and enquire of these damsels, who they are that stand near the palace. Ye stranger women, tell me from what country ye draw near to Grecian abodes?

CHORUS. Phœnicia indeed is my native land that reared me; but the descendants of the sons of Agenor sent me hither for Phœbus, as firstfruits of the spear.¹ And the renowned son of Œdipus being about to conduct me to the awful abode of the oracle, and the hearth of Loxias, in the meanwhile the Argives marched against the city. But do thou answer me in turn, who art thou who hast come to the seven-gated fortress of the land of Thebes?

POL. My father indeed was Œdipus the son of Laius; and Jocasta was my mother, the daughter of Menœceus: and the Theban people call me Polyneices.

CHORUS. O kinsman of the sons of Agenor, kinsman of my princes, by whom I was sent hither, on bended knee I fall down before thee, O king, observing the custom of my home. Oh, after long time thou hast² come to the land of thy fathers! Ho! lady, come forth with hasty step, throw wide the gates! O mother that didst bear this man, why delayest thou to pass

¹ 283. Oratio est ἀνακόλουθος, pro μέλλων δὲ πέμπ· με Οἶδ. κλ. γόν., ἐκωλύθη τῷ τοῦς Ἀργείους ἐπιστρατεῦσαι. —ΜΑΤΤΗ. Or, μέλλων δὲ

πέμπ. με Οἶδ. κλ. γόνος may be taken as a nominative absolute.

² 295. ἔβας twice. P.

forth from the lofty halls, and to embrace thy child in thine arms ?

JOCASTA.

O damsels, hearing within this palace a Phœnician cry, I drag along the steps of my feet, tremulous with old age. O my child, after long time, in the space of innumerable days, have I beheld thy face. Cast thy breast into the arms of thy mother, and put forth thy cheeks, and the dark locks of the ringlets of thy hair, overshadowing my neck with them. Oh, oh ! thou who hast with difficulty, unexpectedly, unlooked for, appeared to the arms of thy mother, what must I say to thee ? How encircling thy whole body both on this side and that, may I obtain both with hands and words a varied pleasure, the gratification of ancient joys ? O my child, my child, thou hast left the house of thy fathers desolate, having been driven forth an outcast by thine own brother's wrong, assuredly regretted by thy friends, assuredly regretted by Thebes ! From ³ which time I at least am shorn of my white locks in token of mourning, neglecting them with weeping ; and stripped of white robes, my child, I exchange them for these dark rags of ill-omened blackness, ⁴ casting them around me. But he in the palace, the old man bereft of sight, possessing ever a tearful regret for the kindred pair that has been unyoked from his house, at one time is for rushing upon suicidal death by the sword, or ascending above the chambers attempts to hang himself,⁵ groaning

³ 322. Locus videtur corruptus. P.

323. δακρυνόεσσαν ιέϊσα. P.

⁴ 325. ἀμφὶ non jungendum cum ἀμείβομαι, sed per

se est pro ἀμφιβάλλουσα. — MATTH.

⁵ 333. ὑπὲρ τέρεμνά τ' ἀγχόνας. Superascendens lecta (ubi semotus esset ab arbitris) ruit in laqueos. — VALCK.

forth curses against his children; and at others ever with the wailings of lamentations he conceals himself in darkness.⁶ But of thee, O my child, I hear in sooth that thou united in a foreign marriage hast in thy house the pleasure of begetting children, and that thou hast made a foreign alliance, woes never to be forgotten by thy mother here and Laius, him of old, the disgrace of alien wedlock. But neither did I kindle for thee the light of fire, which is customary at marriages, as becomes a happy mother; nor was Ismenus celebrated by the nuptial rite of drawing water; but throughout the city of the Thebans the bringing home of thy bride was passed over in silence.⁷ May he perish who hath done these things, whether the sword or strife or thy father be the cause, or whether the god hath burst in upon the house of Œdipus; for against me the woe of these evils has come.

CHORUS. A strange influence on women have the children born from their pangs, and the whole female sex is, somehow, attached to its offspring.

POL. My mother, wisely and yet not wisely have I come among my enemies; but it is compulsory on all to desire their native land; and he who says otherwise, rejoiceth indeed in words, but hath his mind there. And so I entertained some fear and alarm lest some treachery on the part of my brother should kill me, and so, with my hand armed with a sword I passed through the city, casting my glances around. But one thing is my succour, the truce and thy good faith, which brought me [thou who didst bring me P.] within the

⁶ 335. σκοτία. P.

ampliorem descriptionem posuit

⁷ 350. ὅλοιτο τὰδ'. Debebat addi ὁ δράσας, pro quo

ἔιτε—Οἰδιπόδα.—DIND.

walls of my fathers; and I arrived with many tears, at beholding after so long a time the temples and altars of the gods, and the gymnastic schools in which I was educated, and the waters of Dirce; from which unjustly banished I inhabit a foreign city, having a fount of tears streaming from my eyes. But after my griefs I behold again another grief in thee, with thy head shaven with the razor and in dark vestments; woe is me for my miseries! How fearful a thing, O my mother, is enmity between friends of the same house, and how⁸ difficult are the reconciliations it admits of! But what does my aged father, within the house, whose light is darkness? and what my two sisters? They groan, I ween, for my wretched exile.

Joc. Some one of the gods is bringing the race of Œdipus to utter destruction; for with this did he commence it, that I indeed should become a mother in disobedience to the law, and then that thy sire should contract an accursed marriage, and that thou shouldst be born. But what is all this? We must bear the decrees of the gods. But I am afraid of asking thee the questions I desire to know, lest I vex thy soul: but with a longing desire have I come.

Pol. Well, ask on, leave nothing deficient; for what thou desirest, my mother, those things are pleasant to me also.

Joc. Well then I ask thee first of the things I desire to know. What is it to be deprived of one's native land? A great evil, is it not?

Pol. The greatest; and in fact more than in words.

⁸ 375. δυσλύτους. perh. = ἀπόρους πρὸς τὸ λύειν (τὴν ἔχραν sc.)

Joc. What fashion of life is it? What is the hardship to exiles?

Pol. One of the greatest is, the exile has not freedom of speech.

Joc. This that thou hast said is the lot of a slave, not to express what one feels.

Pol. He must bear the follies of those in power.

Joc. And this too is grievous, to be a fool with the foolish.

Pol. Moreover, for gain he must play the slave, contrary to his nature.

Joc. But their hopes feed exiles, as they say.

Pol. Aye, they look on them with gracious eyes, but they are slow in coming.

Joc. But does not time show them to be vain?

Pol. They have a sort of pleasure that sweetens woes.

Joc. But on what means didst thou live, before finding support by thy marriage?

Pol. Sometimes I had sufficient for the day, and at other times I might have nothing.

Joc. But did not thy father's friends and allies assist thee?

Pol. ⁹Be prosperous,—but the assistance of friends is nothing, if one is in adversity.

Joc. But did not even thy noble birth exalt thee to high station?

Pol. 'T is an evil thing to have nothing; my birth fed me not.

⁹ 403. εὖ πράσσει. Interpretatur *μηδ' αὐτῷ* Valckenærius et comparat cum *ζηλῶ σε*, Med. 60 *ἐντυχόης, ὄνατο*. Sed ob-

stat particula *δ'*. The sense is, *Be prosperous,—and you may expect assistance: conf. Luke xiii. 9.*

Joc. Their native land, as it seems, is a thing most dear to mortals.

Pol. Thou couldst not even express by words how dear it is.

Joc. But how camest thou to Argos? What intention hadst thou?

Pol. Loxias delivered a certain oracle to Adrastus.

Joc. What oracle? What is this thou hast said? I have not heard it.

Pol. That he should unite his daughters in marriage to a wild boar and a lion.

Joc. And what hadst thou to do with the names of wild beasts, my son?

Pol. I know not. The deity summoned me to the chance.

Joc. Yea, for the God is wise. But in what way didst thou gain the marriage?

Pol. It was night, and I went to the portico of Adrastus.

Joc. Seeking a resting-place, like a wandering exile?

Pol. Even so; and then in sooth there came another exile, again.

Joc. Who was he? how wretched then must he also have been!

Pol. Tydeus, who, they say, is sprung from Æneus, for his father.

Joc. In what respect then did Adrastus liken you to wild beasts?

Pol. Because we proceeded to fight for our lairs.

Joc. Then the son of Talaus understood the oracles?

Pol. And gave to us twain the two damsels.

Joc. Art thou happy then in thy marriage, or unfortunate?

POL. My marriage, up to the present time, is not to be found fault with.

JOC. But how didst thou persuade an army to follow thee hither?

POL. Adrastus sware this oath to his two sons-in-law, both Tydeus and myself—for he is connected with me by marriage—that he would restore both of us to our country, but me first. And many valiant men of the Argives and Mycenæans are with me, showing me a favour that is grievous to me, but necessary; for I am marching against mine own city. But I have sworn by the gods how unwillingly I have raised the spear against my loved parents. But the cessation of these evils extends itself to thee, my mother, that thou, by reconciling friends who are of the same blood, cause me and thyself and the whole city to rest from calamities. 'Tis an old song indeed, but nevertheless I will repeat it: wealth among men is most valued, and has the greatest power of all things among mortals. And this is what I have come for, leading hither innumerable spears; for a poor nobleman is nobody.

CHORUS. And lo, Eteocles advances hither to a friendly conference; 'tis thy part Jocasta, his mother, to speak such words as with which thou wilt reconcile thy children.

ETEOCLES.

Mother, I am here. And giving thee this gratification, I have come. What are we to do? Let some one begin the conference: for I have stayed from marshalling the city about the walls and the chariots of the troops, that I might hear from thee thy common arbitre-

ment, for which thou hast admitted this man under truce, within the walls, having persuaded me.

Joc. Hold ! in sooth haste brings not with it justice ; but deliberate arguments produce the greatest amount of wisdom. But repress thy stern look and the heavings of thy rage ; for thou art not looking on the severed head of the gorgon, but upon thy brother, who has arrived. And do thou again turn thy face towards thy brother, Polyneices ; for letting your eyes meet, thou wilt both speak better thyself, and better receive this man's words. But I desire to impart to you both sage advice : when a friend, being incensed with a friend, after meeting him looks him in the face, those matters alone he ought to consider concerning which he has come, and to have no remembrance of any former evil. 'Tis thy part then to speak first, my son Polyneices ; for thou hast come leading an army of the sons of Danaus, having suffered injury, as thou allegest ; but may some one of the gods be a judge and a reconciler of evil.

POL. Simple is the speech of truth, and justice stands not in need of subtle explanations ; for it has its due weight of itself ; but the argument of injustice having disease within itself requires skilful drugs. Now I first regarded the interests of my father's house, considering both my advantage and this man's, wishing to escape the curses which Œdipus formerly pronounced against us, I myself voluntarily retired from this land ; having permitted him to rule over the country for a revolving year on condition that I again should have the sovereignty, receiving it in turn ; and not that, becoming at enmity and bloody feud with this man, I should do and suffer some evil, as is the case. And he having assented to

these things, and having called the gods to witness his oath, has done nothing of what he promised, but keeps the sovereignty himself, and my share of the palace. Now I am ready, when I have received mine own, to convey the army out of this land and to dwell in mine own house, receiving it by turn, and again to resign it to this man for an equal time, and neither to ravage my country, nor apply to its towers the approaches by jointed scaling-ladders; which things, if I receive not my right, I will try to do. And I call the gods to witness these things, how acting in every way with justice. I am deprived without justice of my native land most impiously. These several particulars, my mother, I have stated, without stringing together the intricacies of arguments, but only what is just to the wise and the foolish, in my opinion.

CHOR. To me indeed, even although I was not reared on Grecian land, nevertheless thou seemest to speak words of good sense.

ETEO. If to all the same thing was naturally good and wise at the same time, there would never have been ambiguous strife among men; but as it is, nothing appears either alike or in the same degree, to mortals, save only in calling things² by the same name, but this is by no means their substance. For I, my mother, will speak out concealing nothing: I would have gone to the rising of the stars of heaven and beneath the earth, if able to effect this, to hold the mightiest dominion of the gods. This advantage, therefore, my mother, I do not wish to give up to another rather than to keep it for myself. For 'tis cowardice in him, whoever possessing

² 502. ὀνόμασιν. P. "except in their names"—

the more, takes up with the less. And besides this, I am ashamed that this man who has come in arms and is ravaging the land should obtain what he desires; for to Thebes this would become a reproach, if from fear of the spear of Mycenæ I were to surrender my sceptre for this man to hold. And he ought to have attempted the reconciliation not in arms; for ³argument is capable of compelling all that the sword of the enemy might effect. But if he is willing to dwell in the land on other terms, it is permitted him; but I will not willingly give up that, when it is in my power to rule, that I should ever be this man's slave. Wherefore let fire come, and let swords come, yoke ye your steeds, fill the plains with chariots, since I will not resign to this man my dominion. For since we must act unjustly, 'tis most honourable to be unjust for the sake of empire, but in all other matters we must act righteously.

CHOR. One ought not to speak fair words, ⁴except his deeds be fair also: for this is not fair, but bitter in the sight of justice.

JOC. O my son Eteocles, not every evil is imposed upon old age, but its experience is able to show forth somewhat that is wiser than the young can show. Why desirest thou Ambition, my son, the most pernicious of deities? Do not thou at least so; the goddess is unjust; and into many happy homes and cities hath she entered and gone out again to the destruction of her entertain-

³ 516. ἔξαιρει—P. "gains"—
516. Recte Crusenius in Plut.
vertit "omne id expugnare
verba compta ferrum quod mi-
nax possit." et quod proprie de
ferro dici poterat, ad orationem,
quæ similem vim habet, com-
mode transfertur.—MATTH.

⁴ 526. μή' πί τοῖς ἐργῶ καλῶ
pro ἐπὶ ἐργοῖς μὴ καλοῖς dic-
tum putat Matthiæ. (i. e. on
unfair actions.)—But Schole-
field would give a possessive
force to the Art. (τοῖς), as if it
were, εἰ τὰ ἔργα σοῦ μὴ καλά
ἔστι.—

ers: and upon her thou art mad. This is better, my son, to honour equality, which binds together friends with friends and cities with cities and allies with allies. For that which is equal is by nature rightful among men, but the less ever stands up at war with the greater, and commences a day of enmity. For equality also hath established measures among mortals and divisions of weights, and hath defined the laws of numbers, and equally the dim eye of night and the light of the sun traverse their yearly revolution, and neither of them is envious, from being surpassed. Are the sun then and the night slaves to mortals, and wilt not thou endure to have an equal share of the palace, and wilt not give to this man his? And if so where is justice? Why honourest thou so exceedingly absolute power, that is a prosperous injustice, and deemest this a great⁵ thing, to be gazed upon in reverence? Nay, but 'tis vanity. Or wishest thou to experience many labours having much wealth in thy house? But what is the having more than another? It has but a name; for that which is sufficient is enough at least to the wise. In no wise in sooth do mortals possess their wealth as their own, but holding what belongs to the gods, we are their stewards; and when they desire it, they take it back again;⁶ for prosperity is not stable, but lasts only for a day. Come, if I ask thee the question, proposing at once the alternative of two things; whether wishest thou to reign or to save the city? Wilt thou say, to reign? But if this man conquer thee, and the swords of Argos vanquish the spear

⁵ 550. ὑπερφεῦ, καὶ μέγ' ἡγήσαιο; τὸ δὲ περιβλέπεσθαι τίμιον; P. (i. e. Why honour-est thou etc. and deemest it a

great thing? Or is it an honourable thing to be gazed upon? etc.—

⁶ 558. om. P.

of the Cadmeans, thou wilt behold this citadel of the Thebans subdued, and thou wilt behold many captive damsels forcibly ravished by hostile warriors. Agonizing, then, will that wealth, which thou seekest to keep, prove to Thebes, and ambitious wilt thou be found. To thee indeed I speak this; but to thee, Polyneices, I say, Adrastus hath conferred on thee foolish benefits; and foolishly also hast thou come to sack the city. Come, if thou conquer this land, (which may it never come to pass) in the name of the gods how then wilt thou set up the trophies of thy spear? And how again wilt thou commence sacrifices, having conquered thy fatherland, and how wilt thou inscribe on spoils by the streams of Inachus "Polyneices having consumed Thebes with fire offered up these shields to the gods?" Never, O my child, may it be thine to acquire such renown as this from Greeks. But if on the other hand thou art overcome, and this man's fortune surpass thine, how wilt thou return to Argos, having left behind innumerable corpses? And, in sooth, some one will say, "O Adrastus, thou who hast contracted evil espousals, through the marriage of one bride we are destroyed." Thou hurriest on two evils, my son, the being deprived of those, and falling in the midst of these. Relinquish, both of you, that which is excessive, relinquish it; the folly of two men, when they both meet at the same point, is a most foul evil.

CHOR. O ye gods, may ye be averters of these woes, and grant ye some means of reconciliation to the sons of Œdipus!

ETEO. Mother, it is no longer a time for words, but the intervening time has been expended in vain, and thy zeal brings nothing to any conclusion; for I will never

agree otherwise than upon the terms I have stated, that I, wielding the sceptre, shall be king of this land. But ceasing from thy lengthy exhortations, let me go. And thou, convey thyself without these walls or thou shalt die.

POL. By whose hand? Who is so invulnerable as, having aimed a blood-thirsty sword against me, not to endure the same fate?

ETEO. Near thee, not gone far from thee; lookest thou upon my hands?

POL. I look upon them; but a cowardly and a dastardly evil is wealth.

ETEO. And is it therefore thou hast come with so many against one who is nothing in battle?

POL. Aye, for a safe general is better than a rash one.

ETEO. Thou boastest, trusting in the truce which saves thee from death.

POL. And of thee a second time I demand the sceptre and my share of the land.

ETEO. I am not prevailed upon by thy demand; for I will rule mine own house.

POL. Having more than thy share?

ETEO. I confess it. But begone from the land.

POL. O ye altars of the gods of my fathers—

ETEO. Whom thou art here to destroy.⁷

POL. Hear ye me!

ETEO. And who would hear thee who hast marched against thy country?

POL. ⁸And ye, temples of the gods with white steeds—

ETEO. Who abominate thee.

⁷ 604. *πάρει*; P.

Amphion and Zethus. cf. Herc.

⁸ 606. *λευκόπῳλοι θεοί*.—

F. v. 29. Dind.

POL. I am driven forth from my native land—

ETEO. Aye, for thou hast come to drive them out.

POL. With injustice, at least, O ye gods!

ETEO. At Mycenæ, not here, invoke the gods.

POL. Thou art impious—

ETEO. But not an enemy of my country, as thou art.

POL. Thou who drivest me forth robbed of my portion.

ETEO. Aye, and I will slay thee, moreover.

POL. O my father, hearest thou what I am suffering?

ETEO. Aye, and he hears what deeds thou art doing.

POL. And thou, my mother?

ETEO. It is not lawful for thee to name the name of mother.

POL. O my country!

ETEO. Get thee to Argos, and invoke the waters of Lerne.

POL. I will go, trouble not thyself; but thee I praise, my mother.

ETEO. Get forth from the land.

POL. I will go forth: but grant me to look upon my father.

ETEO. Thou shalt not obtain it.

POL. But my virgin sisters—

ETEO. Not even them shalt thou ever see more.

POL. O my sisters!

ETEO. Why callest thou on them, being their greatest foe?

POL. O my mother, farewell *thou*!

JOC. Aye, in sooth, I experience ⁹ welfare, my child.

⁹ 618. τέκνον; P.—Do I, in sooth, etc.?

POL. I am no longer thy son.

JOC. In many respects I was born to be wretched.

POL. Aye, for this man insults over us.

ETEO. Yes, for I am insulted in return.

POL. Where ever wilt thou stand before the tower ?

ETEO. For what cause inquirest thou this of me ?

POL. I will take my station against thee, to slay thee.

ETEO. A desire of this possesses me also.

JOC. O wretched me ! what are ye about to do, O my children ?

POL. The deed itself will show.

JOC. Will ye not avoid the furies of your father ?

ETEO. Let his whole house utterly come to nought !

POL. Verily, soon my murderous sword shall no longer be idle. But I call to witness the land that nurtured me, and the gods, how, in dishonour, suffering pitiable wrongs, I am driven forth from the land, like a slave, and not like one born from the same father, Œdipus. And should anything befall thee, my country, blame not me, but this man ; for not willingly have I come, but unwillingly I am expelled from the land. And thou, king Phœbus, guardian of streets, and ye halls, fare ye well, and ye my comrades, and ye statues of gods rich in the sacrifice of sheep ! For I know not whether it is granted me to address you ever again : but my hopes slumber not yet, in which I trust, by the help of the gods, that having slain this man I shall rule over this land of Thebes.

ETEO. Begone from the land. And with truth did thy father impose on thee, by divine prescience, the name of Polyneices, a name derived from contentions.

CHORUS.

Cadmus the Tyrian came to this land; and for him the fourfooted heifer cast¹ herself down, bringing the oracle to an accomplishment, there, where the divine decree ordained that² he should make his abode in the fire-bearing plains of the Aonians,³ and where the moisture of beautiful streams derived from the waters of Dirce flow over the fields, verdant and fruitful; there where his mother gave birth to Bromius, in wedlock with Jove; Bromius, whom the clustering ivy twining around him covered while yet a babe, making him happy with its verdant overshadowing shoots; a Bacchic dance for the virgins and matrons of Thebes, singing, Evoë; there, where was a bloodthirsty serpent, born of Ares, a savage warder, guarding, with eyeballs rolling in every direction, watery rills and fresh streams. Him Cadmus, having come for sacrificial water, slew with a stone, having cast it upon his bloodthirsty head with the hurling of his monster-slaying arm, by the counsel of divine Pallas, born without a mother, having cast into the fruitful fields its teeth, fallen to the earth: from which earth sent up a spectacle of warriors in panoply, above the surface of the soil. But steelhearted bloodshed reunited it with earth; and it bedewed with blood the land that had exhibited it to the warm breezes of the air. And thee too, Epaphus, the descendant of Io of old, first mother of thy race, thee O son of Jove, I call upon, I call upon with barbarian cry, oh, with barbarian prayers, come, come to this land! Thy descend-

¹ 640. ἀδάμαστον. P. *ibid.* πέσημα δὶκε *nihil aliud est nisi έπεσε*; et quod ad μόσχος *referendum erat, accommodatum est voci πέσημα, ἀδάμαστον*

pro ἀδάμαστος μόσχος. Matth.

² 643. μὲν. μιν. P. *Scribendum μιν.* Dind.

³ 645. ἵνα γε. P.

ants first made it their home, the ⁴land which the ⁵two deities, Persephassa and the beloved goddess Demeter, Earth, queen of all things, and nurse of all things, had in possession. Send thou the firebearing goddesses to defend this land; for all things are easy to gods.

ETEOCLES.

Go thou and fetch hither Creon the son of Menœceus, the brother of my mother Jocasta, saying this to him, that I wish to confer with him on matters of private import, and of common interest to the city, before I go forth to battle and the array of the spear. However, he saves thy feet the trouble by his presence; for I see him advancing towards my house.

CREON.

Verily I have traversed much ground, wishing to see thee, O royal Eteocles, and I have visited the gates and the sentries of the Cadmeans all round, seeking thy person.

ETEO. And indeed I was wishing to see thee, Creon: for I found the hope of reconciliation very defective, when I went, and engaged ⁶ in conference with Polyneices.

CREON. I heard that he was haughtier than Thebes, and relied on the alliance and army of Adrastus. But these things one must refer to the gods. But what is most immediately pressing, that I have come to tell thee.

⁴ 683. *α* cannot be construed with *ἐκτίσαντο*; wherefore, if *ἐκτίης* be a good reading, *ᾗ* must be changed to *ἄν*. But it is probable that *πάντων ἄνασσα*—*ἐκτίσαντο* is corrupt; and in the place of something construable with *ᾗ*.—DIND.

⁵ Ibid. *διώνυμοι*. either as

having two names each (Earth and Demeter—Cora and Persephone)—or as being *two*. SCH. Vera videtur altera interpret. ut nihil amplius significet quam *δισσαί*.—DIND.

⁶ 702. *συνῆψα*. Subauditur *ἐμαυτόν*. P.

ETEO. What is this? For I know not what thou speakest of.

CREON. A certain captive from the Argives has come.

ETEO. And what⁷ is the last news he brings of matters there?

CREON. That the host of the Argives is on the point of investing, in arms, the city of the Cadmeans, with towers⁸ round about her.

ETEO. The city of the Cadmeans, then, must sally forth in arms.

CREON. Whither? Surely you are not, like a young man, blind to what you ought to see?

ETEO. Without these entrenchments, to fight with speed.

CREON. Scanty are the numbers of this land, but they are numerous.

ETEO. I know them, that they are valiant in their words.

CREON. Argos has some reputation among the Greeks.

ETEO. Be of good courage; I will speedily fill the plain with the slaughter of them.

CREON. May it be so! But I see that this is a matter of much difficulty.

ETEO. Be sure, I will not keep the army within the walls.

CREON. And yet good counsel is the whole of victory.

ETEO. Dost thou wish then that I betake myself to some other plan?

CREON. Yes, to every plan, before running all at once into danger.

⁷ 709. τι. P. "Does he bring any etc.?"

⁸ 710. πύργοισι. πυκνοῖσι.

P. Corrigendum videtur πυκνοῖσι.—DIND.—"with frequent arms"—

ETEO. If we were to attack them by night from an ambush?

CREON. Aye, if, supposing thou failest, thou wilt get back here safe again.

ETEO. Night gives equality, and, to the daring, advantage.

CREON. The shadow of night is a terrible time to meet bad fortune in.

ETEO. But shall I assault them with the spear while they are at their repast?

CREON. There might be consternation; but it is requisite to be victorious.

ETEO. Aye, and in sooth the ford of Dirce is deep to retreat by.

CREON. Everything is inferior to keeping well on your guard.

ETEO. But how, if we were to ride down the Argive army?

CREON. There too their host is hedged in with chariots round about.

ETEO. What then *shall* I do? am I to give up the city to the enemy?

CREON. By no means; but take counsel, since thou art a wise man.

ETEO. What scheme then is found wiser than mine?

CREON. They say that seven men among them, as I heard—

ETEO. Have been appointed to do what? For the strength of seven is but little.

CREON. Have been appointed chiefs of companies,⁹ to attack the seven gates.

⁹ 739. ἀνάσσειν. P. “to be chiefs of”—

ETEO. What then must we do? For I will not wait till a difficulty comes.

CREON. Do thou also choose seven men against them, before the gates.

ETEO. To be chiefs of companies, or of a single spear?

CREON. Of companies, selecting those who are most valiant.

ETEO. I understand; to defend the approaches of the walls.

CREON. Choose also colleagues for them; for one man sees not everything.

ETEO. Selecting them for courage or for prudence of mind?

CREON. For both. For deprived of one the other is nothing.

ETEO. Thus it shall be; but I, having visited the seven towers of the city¹, will appoint captains over the gates, as thou advisest; opposing an equal number to an equal number of the enemy. But 'twere great waste of time to recite the name of each, when the enemy has sat down before our very walls. But I will go, that we may not leave our band idle; and may it be mine to find my brother opposed to me, and having engaged with him in conflict, to take him with the spear, [and to slay him who came to ravage my country.] But the marriage of my sister Antigone and thy son Hæmon, if I should in any way fail of good fortune, must be thy

¹ 748. πόλιν. κύκλον. P. "To the seven-towered circuit of the wall." It is obviously absurd for Eteocles to say he is going into the city, when he is there: but it is doubtful whe-

ther κύκλον will do by itself for κύκλος τειχέων. Dind. Perhaps ἐπτάπυργον πόλιν may be taken as=τοὺς ἑπτα πύργους τῆς πόλεως, "the seven towers of the city."

care; and the former betrothal I now confirm, upon my going forth to battle. And thou art my mother's brother. Why need I speak at length? Support her worthily, both for thy sake and mine. But my father deserves the reproach of folly towards himself, having deprived himself of sight. I do not greatly praise him; and us with curses he will slay, if it so happen. But there is one thing neglected by us, if Teiresias the prophet-seer has any oracle to pronounce, to enquire about these things of him: but I will send hither Menœceus thy son, namesake of thy father, bringing² Teiresias with him, Creon. For with thee he will come to speak with pleasure; but I, ere this, have attacked his art of rootsaying to his face, so that he has grounds of complaint against me. Now to the city and to thee I give this charge, Creon; if my party is victorious, that the corpse of Polyneices be never buried in this Theban land: and that he shall die who buries him, even if he be one of my friends. To thee indeed I have said this; but to my attendants I say, bring forth my arms and coats of panoply, for even now I go forth to the appointed conflict of the spear, with victorious justice. But I pray to Cætion, the most useful of deities, to preserve this city.

CHORUS.

O Mars, cause of many woes, why art thou possessed with the desire of bloodshed and death, not harmonizing with the feasts of Bromius? Thou dost not, when bands of youths³ lead the graceful dance, thou dost

² 770. λαβόντα. ἄξοντα. P.
“I will send and bring Teiresias.”

³ 787. στεφάνουσι (sicut “vulgi coronam.” Ov. Met. 13. 1.)

Loci sententia hæc est: “nec in pulchros choros ducentibus *circulis* juventutis,” i. e. juvenum et puellarum.

not, letting fly thy ringlets, send forth, through the breathings of the lotus flute, a melodious strain, in which the graces direct the dance; but with shield-bearing warriors, having excited the host of the Argives to the slaughter of Thebes, thou dancest before them in most joyless revelry. Neither dost thou, under the influence of him who maddens with the thyrsus, reel, clad in fawn skins, but thou wheelest round the courser of uncloven hoof, amid the chariots and horses' bits. And advancing along the streams of Ismenus, thou hastenest on with horsemanship, urging the Argives against the progeny of the Sown-men, a shieldbearing company, clad in beautiful armour, matched against walls of stone. Assuredly a fearful Deity is the goddess of Strife, who hath devised these woes for the kings of the land, the house of Labdacus abounding in misery. O thou grove of leaves divine, abounding in wild beasts! Cithæron, beloved of Artemis, nurser of snow! Oh that thou hadst never preserved him who was exposed to death, the child of Jocasta, Œdipus, when cast out in infancy from his home, remarkable for buckles set in gold. And would that the wing of the virgin Sphinx, the mountain monster, had never arrived, that caused mourning over the land, with her songs of most evil melody; she who once, approaching the walls, used to bear off in the claws of her four feet the race sprung from Cadmus, into the pathless light of ether; she whom Hades from beneath the earth sends up against the Cadmeans. But another illfated strife, between the sons of Œdipus, waxes strong through the palace and the city. For never has that which is not good the nature of goodness, nor have the children who are the unlawful offspring of

their mother and the pollution ⁴ of their father: for she entered an incestuous bed. Thou didst bear, O Earth, thou once didst bear (as I heard, I heard once formerly a barbarian tale at home) the race born of the teeth of her serpent feeding off beasts, with purple crest; a most proud reproach against Thebes.⁵ And formerly to the marriage of Harmonia came the denizens of heaven, and to the sound of the phorminx (harp) arose the walls of Thebes, and her towers betwixt two rivers, by the power of the lyre of Amphion; near the centre of the ford of Dirce, who in front of Ismenus, bedews the verdant plain. And Io, the horned primeval mother of the race, bore kings of the Cadmeans; and this city exchanging, one for another, myriads of blessings, hath taken her stand upon the summit of the chaplets of Mars.

TEIRESIAS.

Lead me forward, my daughter; for thou art an eye to my sightless foot, like a star to mariners. Advance in this direction, planting my foot on to the smooth ground, that we stumble not; thy father is infirm. And guard thou for me the oracular tablets⁶ in thy virgin hand, which I have taken, having learned the auguries of birds in the sacred seats, where I draw divinations. My son Menœceus, child of Creon, tell me, how long is the rest of the journey through the city, to thy father; for my knee is fatigued, and as I go, with difficulty I accomplish the frequent step.

⁴ 816. μιάσματα. μιάσμα τε
P. μιάσματα mali excusum pro
μιάσμα τε. DIND.

⁵ 821. ὄνειδος, perhaps merely
= "report." Soph. Phil. 477.
But the *reproach* might be in

being descended from the serpent; the *honour* (Valck.), in being γεγενεῖς.

⁶ 838. κλήρους. tabellas vaticiniorum. VALCK.

CREON. Be of good courage; for near to thy friends, Teiresias, thou hast brought thy foot out of harbour. But take hold of him, my child; for an old man, whether he be carried in a chariot or go on foot, always expects with pleasure the support of another's hand.⁷

TEIR. Well, I am here. Why summonest⁸ thou me with haste, Creon?

CREON. I have not yet forgotten; but collect thy strength and take breath, dismissing the weariness of thy journey.

TEIR. Aye, indeed,⁹ with fatigue I have arrived, having travelled hither from among the house of Erechtheus yesterday. For there also there was a war against the spear of Eumolpus, in which I rendered the sons of Æcrops gloriously victorious; and I have as thou seest, this crown of gold, having received it as the firstfruit of the spoils of the enemy.

CREON. I reckon as a good omen thy crown of glorious victory. For we are tossed, as thou knowest, in a tempest of the spear of the sons of Danaus, and there is great peril for Thebes. The king, however, has already gone arrayed in panoply, against the might of Mycenæ.¹ But me he hath charged to learn from thee by doing what we might best preserve the city.

TEIR. For Eteocles's sake, indeed, closing up my

⁷ 847-8. Rectè Schæferus. Vulgata videtur sana; sic ver- tam. Semper (s. omnis) enim senex, sive curru vehatur, sive pedibus incedat, libenter ex- spectat alienæ manus levatio- nem. DIND.

The construction appears to be; *πᾶσα ἀπήνη, πᾶς τε ποῦς πρεσβύτου φιλεῖ κ. τ. λ.*

⁸ 849. *μ' ἐκάλες*. P. "Why didst thou summon me?"

⁹ 852. *γούν'*. P.—"I have arrived with weariness as to my knees."

¹ 862. Or perhaps, "to ward off Mycenæ" quasi *πρὸς ἀλ- κήν τῶν Μυκηνῶν* cf. 1097.

mouth I would have withheld my prophecies; but to thee, since thou wishest to know them, I will tell them. For this land hath long been ill at ease, from the time when Laius became a father in despite of the gods, and begat the wretched Œdipus, to be a husband to his mother: and the bloody destruction of his eyesight was a contrivance of the gods, and a display of their power to Greece. And these things the sons of Œdipus wishing, in course of time, to conceal, as if, forsooth, they would escape from the power of the gods, erred in their folly. For by granting their father neither due honours nor liberty to go forth, they drove an illfated man wild; and he breathed out against them fearful curses, being both maddened and, moreover, dishonoured. In regard² to which matters, what deed did I not, and what words did I not say, so that I became at feud with the sons of Œdipus? But death by each other's hands approaches them, Creon; and many men, corpses lying upon corpses, having mingled in fight the darts of Argives and Cadmeans, will cause bitter wailings to the land of Thebes. And thou, O illfated city, art uprooted from thy foundations, unless men shall obey my words. For indeed this was the first thing required, that no one of the race of Œdipus should be a citizen, much less a king, of the land, as being possessed by an evil spirit, and likely to overturn the state. But since the evil has vanquished the good, there is one other means of safety. But inasmuch as it is both unsafe³ for me to say this, and bitter to those who endure the misfortune, namely, of affording to the city a saving remedy, I will begone; fare ye well.

² 878. *καὶ ὧ τίς*. P. "and I, what words did I not act and say, etc.?"—

³ 891. *οὐδ' ἐμοὶ* P. "not even for me."

For, being one among many, I shall suffer what is to come, if it must be so : for how can I help it ?

CREON. Stay here, old man.

TEIR. Lay not hands upon me.

CREON. Stay, why flyest thou me ?

TEIR. Thy fortune flies thee, and not I.

CREON. Divulge a means of safety to the city and the citizens.

TEIR. Aye, surely, thou desirest it, and speedily thou wilt desire it not.

CREON. And how can I not wish to save my native land ?

TEIR. Dost thou then wish to hear, and art thou very anxious ?

CREON. Aye,⁴ for what other end ought I to be zealous ?

TEIR. Thou shalt straightway hear my prophecies. But first I wish to learn this for certain,—where is Menœceus, who led me hither ?

CREON. Here he stands not far from thee, but by thy side.

TEIR. Let him begone then far away from my oracular words.

CREON. Being my son by birth, he will keep silence on matters when it is proper.

TEIR. Wishest thou then that I tell it thee in his presence ?

CREON. Aye, for he would receive pleasure by hearing some means of safety.

TEIR. Hear ye then the course of my oracular words, by doing what ye might save the city of the Cadmeans.

⁴ 902. τί μ' ἄλλο. τί μᾶλλον. P. Aye, for what ought one to be *more* zealous.

Thou must sacrifice this thy son Menœceus in behalf of his country, since thou thyself callest for the misfortune.

CREON. What sayest thou? What speech is this that thou hast uttered, old man?

TEIR. What is ⁵right, that is also necessary for thee to do.

CREON. O thou who hast spoken many evils in a short space of time!

TEIR. Aye, evils to thee; but to thy country great and saving blessings.

CREON. I heard not, I heeded not,—let the city go!

TEIR. This man is no longer the same, he is shunning it again.

CREON. Go in peace: for I need not thy divinations.

TEIR. Hath truth perished, because thou art unfortunate?

CREON. Oh by thy knees and by thy venerable hair—

TEIR. Why fallest thou before me? thou askest for evils hard to be warded off.⁶

CREON. Keep silent: and speak not these words to the city.

TEIR. Biddest thou me do wrong? I will not keep it secret.

CREON. What then wilt thou do to me? Wilt thou slay my son?

⁵ 916. Matthiæ. Ineptum est *πέφυκε*. Quid dici debuerit rectè perspexit Reiskius, qui *πέφαγκα* (I have said) conjecit: Sed scribendum *πέφηνε* (has been shown).—DIND.

⁶ 924. *δυσφύλακτα*. i. e. *fated* evils. For Creon by asking for

his son's life, was asking for the destruction of the city.—MATTH.

But Schæfer translates: "Petis rem urbi perniciosam, (fiii salutem) quam tenere (i. e. servare) non poteris."

TEIR. That will be the business of others, but by me it will be spoken.

CREON. And from what has this woe come upon me and my son?

TEIR. Thou askest me aright, and art entering into a trial of words. It is required that this man being sacrificed over the den where was produced the earth-born serpent, guardian of the streams of Dirce, should give his lifeblood in libations to earth; in consequence of Mars' ancient course of wrath against Cadmus, Mars, who is avenging the earthborn serpent's death. And by doing this ye will gain Mars as an ally. For if earth in return for fruit receive fruit, and in return for blood, receive the blood of mortals, ye will have that land propitious to you which in old time sent up a brazen-helmeted crop of Sown-men. And it is required that one shall die of the blood of that man who was born the son of the jaw of the serpent. But thou art the only one left to us here of the race of the Sown-men, unmixed both on the mother's and father's side, thou and thy children. Hæmon's marriage, however, forbids his sacrifice; [for even if he has not enjoyed the marriage bed, yet he has a bride.] But this youth, being devoted for this city, by his death might save his native land. And bitter will he render their return to Adrastus and the Argives, having cast a dark fate over their eyes, but glorious will he render Thebes. Of these two fates choose thou one; for save either thy son or thy country. All the information I, indeed, can give thee, thou hast; lead me, my child, homewards. But whosoever practises the art of divination, is foolish; for if he chance to have announced things adverse, he has rendered himself hateful to those for whom he takes auguries; but if

from pity he speak false words to those who consult him, he does wrong in the sight of the gods. Phœbus alone ought to have prophesied to mortals, he who fears no one.

CHOR. Creon, why art thou silent, controlling thy voice, so as to be speechless? For I also am in consternation no less than thou.

CREON. But what could any one utter? 'Tis evident what I at least have to say. For I will never proceed to that pitch of calamity as to give up to the city my son, sacrificed. For the nature of all men is to love their offspring, nor would any one give up his own child for men to slay. Let no one eulogize me while he is slaying my children. But I myself, for I am in the 7 prime of life, am ready to die, an expiatory offering for my country. But come, my child, before the whole city has learned this, do thou, disregarding the unbridled oracles of diviners, fly with all speed, quitting this land. For he will tell these things to the magistrates and the generals, going to the seven gates, and the chiefs of the companies; and if indeed we anticipate him, thou art safe; but if thou art too late, we are undone, thou wilt die.

MENŒCEUS.

Whither then must I fly? to what city? to which of our friends?

CREON. Where thou wilt be farthest removed from this land.

MEN. 'Tis right, therefore, that thou shouldest tell me, and I execute the task.

CREON. Having arrived at Delphi—

MEN. Whither must I then go, my father?

CREON. To the land of Ætolia.

MEN. And from that land whither am I to pass?

CREON. To the Thesprotian soil.

MEN. To the awful seats of Dodona?

CREON. Thou hast judged aright.

MEN. What protection, then, shall I find?

CREON. The god is a receiver of fugitives.⁸

MEN. And what way have I of getting money?

CREON. I will provide gold.

MEN. Thou sayest well, my father. Go then; for I⁹ having visited thy sister to console her, whose breasts I first sucked when deprived of my mother and parted from her, an orphan, I mean Jocasta, I will go and will save my life. But come, go thou; let not there be any hinderance on thy part.—O ye women, how well I have freed my father from fear, having deceived him with words, so as to obtain what I desire: he, who is for conveying me out, so as to deprive the city of good fortune, and who devotes me to cowardice. And 'tis pardonable indeed in an old man, but in me it has no excuse, to be a traitor to the country which brought me forth. That ye may understand then, I will go and preserve the city, and will offer up my life, to die in behalf of this land. For 'tis shameful, if those who are not bound by oracular decrees, and have not come under the necessity imposed by the gods, yet standing in battle array shall not shrink from death,

⁸ 984. πόμπιμος. cf. Eur. Med. v. 848. χώρα πόμπ—
ἡγουν τὴν ἐκπεμφθεῖσαν ἐπι-
δεχομένη, οὐκ αὐτὴ πόμπιμος
οὕσα.—SCH.

⁹ 986. seq. “Jungenda vi-
dentur, μολῶν προσηγορήσων,
εἶμι καὶ σῶσω βίον. “quum
Jocasten adiero ut ei valedi-
cam, abibo et vitam servabo.”

MATTH.

fighting in front of the towers in behalf of their country. But I, having betrayed my own father and brother and country, like a coward shall go forth out of the land; yet wherever I live, I shall be deemed vile. No! by Jove who dwells among the stars and by bloodthirsty Mars, he who in old time established the Sown-men, who sprung up from out of earth, to be princes of this land. But I will go and having taken my stand on the highest battlements, I will slay myself over the dark deep den of the serpent, where the soothsayer directed, and will free the land. My speech is said. But I go, to confer on the city by my death no mean gift, but I shall free this land from a curse. For if each individual, taking whatever benefit he could, were to go through with that, and contribute it to the good of his country, then states having experience of fewer evils would thenceforward be prosperous.

CHORUS.

Thou didst come, thou didst come, O winged one, offspring of earth and the viper beneath the earth, plunderer of Cadmeans, cause of many groans, destroyer of many, hateful monster, half-virgin, with wandering wings and talons tearing raw food! Who of old bearing off on high youths from Dircæan regions, with music unaccompanied by the lyre, and with an accursed fury, thou didst bring, thou didst bring on their native land murderous woes. Bloodthirsty was he of the gods who brought these things to pass. And wailings of matrons, and wailings of virgins, sent forth groanings through the habitations. With a woeful woeful cry, with a mournful mournful dirge, one uttered one lament, another another, in turns throughout the city. And the sound of groaning and wailing was like unto thunder, when-

ever the winged virgin caused any one of the citizens to disappear from the city. But in course of time there came, by command of the Pythian god, the ill-fated Œdipus to the land of Thebes; then to their joy, but afterwards again their woe: for the wretched one, being glorious in victory over the ænigma, contracts with his mother a marriage that was no marriage, and pollutes the city; and with bloodshed he passes on to a contest of impunity, hurling curses upon his children, miserable that he is. Him we admire, we admire, who hath gone to die in behalf of his fatherland, having left, for Creon indeed, wailings, but about to render the gates of the seven ¹ towers of the land gloriously victorious. May we, may we be mothers blessed with such children, O thou who didst accomplish the death of the serpent, crushed by a stone, having incited the mind of Cadmus to the deed; whence, with ravages, there came rushing on the land a curse from the gods.

MESSENGER.

Ho! who is at the portals of the palace? Open them, convey Jocasta forth from her home. Ho! again and again! 'Twill be after long delay, but nevertheless come forth, hear me, O renowned wife of Œdipus, having ceased from wailings and tears of mourning.

JOCASTA.

O most dear friend, hast thou come, as I suppose, bearing calamitous news, of Eteocles being dead, by the side of whose shield thou hast ever marched, warding off the darts of the ² enemy? What news canst thou

¹ 1058. κλειῖθρα, hic et alib.
P. Ibid. ἐπταπ. κληῖθρα. cf.
748.

² 1074. P. plenius distinguit.
"Thou hast come, I ween."

have come to announce to me? Is my son dead or alive? Tell me.

MESS. He is alive; dread not this, for I will free thee from fear.

Joc. What? How stand the circuits of the seven towers?

MESS. They stand unshattered and the city hath not been stormed.

Joc. But have they come into peril from the Argive spear?

MESS. Aye, to the very point of peril; but the war-god of the Cadmeans proved mightier than the spear of Mycenæ.

Joc. Tell me one thing in the name of the gods, whether thou knowest anything concerning Polyneices? Since this also is a matter of care to me, whether he beholds the light of day.

MESS. Both thy children are alive up to this point of the day.

Joc. Mayest thou prosper!—Well, how repelled ye the spear of the Argives from the gates, defending yourselves within the walls? Tell me, that I may go and delight the blind old man within the palace, this land having been preserved.

MESS. After that the son of Creon, who has died in behalf of the land, standing upon the top of the walls, had passed through his throat a black mounted sword, a deliverance for this land; thy son distributed seven companies and seven captains to seven gates, as guards against the Argive spear; and he appointed horsemen to await horsemen, and men at arms to await buckler-men, that for the weak part of the wall there might be defence against the spear at no great distance. And from the

lofty citadel we behold the white shielded army of the Argives departed from Tecmessus: and, with a run, they brought the city of the Cadmeans close to the entrenchment.³ And the pæan and the sound of trumpets sent forth a din together, on their side, and from us on the wall. And first, indeed, against the Neitian gates, Parthenopæus, the son of the huntress, led a company, bristling with frequent shields, having an appropriate device in the centre of his buckler, Atalante quelling the Æolian boar with far darting shafts. But against the gates of Proetus came the diviner Amphiaraus, with victims on his chariot, having no ostentatious devices, but arms modestly free from device. And against the Ogygian gates advanced king Hippomedon, having for a device, in the centre of his buckler, the Allseeing⁴ one looking out with studded eyes, having some eyes indeed seeing, with the rising of the stars, and others closing themselves as the stars go down, as we were able to see afterwards, when he was dead. But before the Homoloian gates, Tydeus had his station, having a lion's skin upon his shield, bristling with the mane, and⁵ Titan Prometheus was bearing in his right hand a torch, as if to burn the city. And thy son, Polyneices, led on war at the Fountain-gates; and upon his shield for a device, snorting rapid coursers were bounding with fright, being revolved in some cunning way from within on pivots, under the handle itself, so that they appeared to be furious. And Capaneus, no less haughty, was leading

³ 1100. τάρφρου πέλας κ. τ. λ.
Phrasis, si ad verbum reddas, hujusmodi est "cursu conjunxerunt urbem Thebanam, ut vallo contigua esset." Sic solent Græci velocitatem significare. cf. Soph. El. 688.—Musgr.

⁴ 1114. πανόπτην. Argus sc.

⁵ 1121. Post ὦς, interpungit P. i. e. Like Titan Prometheus he was bearing a torch in his hand, etc.

on a company into the conflict of Mars against the Electran gates ; and on the iron-wrought workmanship of his shield, there was an earthborn giant, bearing upon his shoulders an entire city, having torn it up from its foundations⁶ with levers, an intimation to us of what our city will suffer. And at the seventh gate was Adrastus, having his shield full of an hundred vipers in effigy, bearing on his left arm the Argive boast of the Hydra : and from the midst of our walls serpents were carrying off children of the Cadmeans in their jaws. And the show of each one of these served me, adducing it, as a token to recognise the chiefs of the companies. And at first, indeed, we did battle with bows and javelins,⁷ and far darting slings, and crashing showers of stones ; but when we were getting the victory in the battle, Tydeus and thy son, suddenly shouted out, “ O sons of the Danaans, before ye are crushed with missiles, why do ye delay to rush into the gates by scaling, all of ye, light-armed men, horsemen, and guides of chariots ? ” And when they heard the cry not one was idle ; but many fell wounded in their heads, and of our party thou mightest have seen men fallen to the ground before the walls, hurled headlong in crowds, and they were drenching the parched earth with streams of gore. But the Arcadian, not an Argive, the son of Atalante, having burst like a tempest on the gates, calls for fire and mattocks, as if to uproot the city. But Periclymenus, son of the ocean-god, withheld him in his fury, having cast a stone upon his head, a chariot-load, a coping-stone from the battlements ; and he shattered his flaxen

⁶ 1132. βάθρων. βίβλ. P. by force.

lins with a strap to throw them with (ἀγκύλην).

⁷ 1141. μεσαγκύλοις—Jave-

head, and brake the seams of his skull, and straightway besmeared with blood his dark red cheek: nor will he bear away his life to his mother with the beautiful bow, the daughter of Mænalus. But when thy son had seen this gate successful, he passed on to another, and I followed. And I behold Tydeus and his comrades in crowds, darting with Ætolian javelins against the topmost brink of the towers, so that men left in flight the summits of the battlements; but thy son, like a huntsman, rallies them again, and set them again upon the towers. But we pressed on to another gate, having relieved this from its distress. But Capaneus, how might I tell how furiously he raged? For with the approaches of a long scaling ladder he was advancing, and uttered so great a boast as this, that not even the awful fire of Jove should⁸ restrain him from capturing the city from its highest citadel. And at the same time he was proclaiming this, and, assailed with stones, was creeping upwards, contorting his body so as to keep exactly under his shield, as he was passing over the polished rounds of the shafts of the ladder. But when he was even now passing over the coping stone of the wall, Jove strikes him with a thunderbolt; and earth resounded, so that all were afraid; and from the ladder his limbs were hurled far from each other, his hair indeed to Olympus, and his blood to earth, and his hands and legs were whirling round, like the wheel of Ixion; and he falls a blasted corpse to the ground. But when Adrastus saw that Jove warred against his army, he set down the host of the Argives without the entrenchment. But the horsemen, on our part, having seen the

⁸ 1175. *εἰργάθειν*. P.

auspicious miracle of Jove, drove forth their chariots, and⁹ the men-at-arms joined battle in the midst of the camp of the Argives, and there were all evils at once. Men were dying, were falling from the rails of their chariots, and wheels were bounding on, and axle-trees against axle-trees, and corpses were being heaped up with corpses together. We stopped, however, the overthrow of the towers for the present day; but whether this land is to be fortunate henceforward, is the business of the gods: for¹ even now some deity has preserved it. 'Tis² a glorious thing to be victorious; but if the gods have a purpose which is better, may I be fortunate.

Joc. The decrees of the gods and the events of fortune are favourable; for both my sons are alive, and the land hath escaped. But the illfated Creon seems to have derived misfortune from the nuptials of myself and Œdipus, having been bereft of his child, for the city indeed happily, but grievously for himself. But return to thine account, I pray; what do my two sons intend doing upon this?

MESS. Let the rest alone: for ever up to this time they have been fortunate.

Joc. Thou hast this suspiciously; I will not let it be.

MESS. Wishest thou any greater good than that thy children have been saved alive?

Joc. Aye, to hear the rest also, if I am happy in it.

MESS. Let me go; thy son is deprived of his shield-bearer.

Joc. Thou art concealing some bad news and hiding it in darkness.

⁹ 1191. ἰππεῖς, ὀπλῖται, κείς.
P. And those on our part etc.—
drove forth their chariots, horse-

men, men-at-arms, and etc.

¹ 1199. om. P.

² 1200-1. choro trib. P.

MESS. Aye, and ³ I will not tell bad news after news that is good to thee.

Joc. But thou shalt, unless, avoiding me, thou escape into upper air.

MESS. Alas! why didst thou not let me go my way after a message of good tidings, but compellest me to announce what is evil? Thy two sons are about to fight in single combat apart from the rest of the army, a most horrible enterprise: having made before Argives and Cadmeans a speech, such as would they had never spoken. And Eteocles commenced, from a lofty tower, where he had taken his stand, having bid a herald proclaim silence to the host. And he said “O ye chieftains of the land of Greece and most valiant warriors of the Danaans, ye who have marched hither, and ye, host of Cadmus! barter not away your lives either for the sake of Polyneices, or in my behalf: for I myself, running this risk, will singly engage in fight with my brother. And if indeed I slay him, I will rule my house alone, or if vanquished, I will surrender to this man ⁴ the city. But do ye give up the contest and ⁵ depart to the land of Argos, not having left your lives here. [And of the Sown-men also so great a number as is lying dead is enough.]” Thus much he said; and thy son Polyneices rushed forth from the ranks and assented to his words; and all the Argives and the host of Cadmus applauded these things, as deeming them to be just. And on these terms they made a truce, and in the space between the armies the chieftains interchanged oaths, that they would ⁶ abide by it. And even then the two youthful

³ 1215. οὐκ. P. Aye, I will to possess alone—
not, etc.

⁵ 1234. νίσσεσθε. νείσεσθε. P.

⁴ 1232. πόλιν. μόνω. P. I
will surrender it to this man,

⁶ 1241. ἐμμένειν. P.

sons of the aged Œdipus were covering their bodies with brazen armour, and their friends were arraying them, the bravest of the Sown-men indeed the leader of this land, but the other, the chiefs of the sons of Danaus. And they twain stood gleaming, and changed not colour, eagerly desiring to hurl their javelins at each other. And their friends passing before them, some on one side some on the other, encouraging them with words, were thus addressing them: "O Polyneices, it depends on thee to set up an image of Jove, giver of victory, and to grant glorious renown to Argos." And to Eteocles, again, they said "Now thou art about to fight for thy country, now having become gloriously victorious thou wieldest the sceptre." Thus they were haranguing, exhorting them to the fight. And soothsayers were sacrificing sheep, and were⁷ observing the points of the flame, and its windings, its adverse waviness, and the blaze shooting up to a peak; which contains the determination of two events, both the sign of victory and the⁸ fate of the vanquished. But if thou hast any force, or any wise words to speak or enchantments to cause love, go, restrain thy children from the horrible conflict, for the danger is great. And thou wilt reap a fearful prize of tears, having been bereft of two children on this day.

Joc. O my child, come forth, Antigone, in front of the palace; for now the dispensation of the gods does not turn out for thee suitable to dances nor even mai-

⁷ 1255-7. Si in loco obscuro hariolari licet, ἔμπυροι ἀκμαί accipi possunt pro τὰ ἔμπυρα in quibus duo observabant (ἐνώμων) vates, scissiones flammæ (ῥήξεις) quæ circum aras serpens infaustum exitum

portendit, (hinc ὑγραί, multiplici plenu aras lambentes, pro eo ὑγρότης ἐναντία) et rectum flammæ apicem (ἄκραν λαμπάδα)—ΜΑΤΤΗ.

⁸ 1257. τὰ. τὸ. P. The SIGN.

denly occupations. But two most valiant men, and these thy brothers, who are falling upon destruction, thou with thy mother must restrain from falling by each others' hand.

ANTIGONE.

O my mother who didst bear me, what new cause of consternation is this that thou art proclaiming to thy friends in front of this palace?

JOC. O my daughter the life of thy brothers is come to nought.

ANT. How sayest thou?

JOC. They have joined in single combat.

ANT. Woe is me, what wilt thou say, my mother?

JOC. Not what is pleasant—But follow me.

ANT. Whither, having left my maiden apartments?

JOC. Through the army.

ANT. I am ashamed to be seen by a multitude.

JOC. Thy fortunes admit not of modesty.

ANT. And what then shall I do?

JOC. Thou shalt reconcile the strife of thy brothers.

ANT. By doing what, my mother?

JOC. By falling at their feet, with me.

ANT. Lead thou on to the space between the armies, we must not delay.

JOC. Press on, press on, my daughter: for if I overtake my children before the combat, my life is in the light of day; but if they be dead I will lie dead with them.

CHORUS.

Alas, alas! my heart is quaking, quaking with fear, and through my flesh a thrill of pity has passed, pity for the wretched mother. Which then of her two children will shed the blood of another? woe is me for

their woes. O Jove, O Earth, the blood of a kindred neck, a kindred soul, with shieldclashing, with bloodshed! Which of the twain, then, shall I, wretched, wretched bewail, an unhappy corpse? Alas, O Earth! alas, O Earth! the two wild beasts, blood-desiring souls, quivering with the spear, will speedily shed the blood of their fallen foes. Wretched pair, that ever they⁹ entertained a desire of single combat! With a barbarian cry I will utter in tears a doleful wailing befitting the dead. The event is near, hard¹ by bloodshed; the day will decide the future. Illfated, illfated will be the bloodshed by reason of avenging furies. But I will stop my present wailings, for I see Creon advancing hither gloomily towards the palace.

CREON.

Woe is me, what shall I do? Whether myself or the city must I lament with tears, the city which so great a cloud envelopes as to send it across the stream of Acheron? For my son too has perished, having died in behalf of the land, having acquired a noble renown, but woeful to me. And him I wretched having just now taken up from the dragon cliffs slain by his own hand, have conveyed him in my arms, and my whole house resounds with wailing. But I an old man have come for mine aged sister Jocasta that she may wash and lay out my son who is no more. For he who is not dead ought by paying honours to the dead, piously to reverence the God beneath the earth.

CHOR. Thy sister hath gone forth from the palace Creon, and the damsel Antigone in company with her mother.

⁹ 1300. ἡλυθέτην. P.

¹ 1304. φόνος. P. bloodshed is near.

CREON. Whither, and for what purpose? inform me.

CHOR. She heard that her sons were about to come to battle in single combat, for the royal palace.

CREON. How sayest thou? In sooth, while paying funeral honours to the corpse of my son, I have not arrived so far as to know these events.

CHOR. But however thy sister has been some time gone. But I suppose that the deadly conflict between the sons of Œdipus, Creon, has by this time been accomplished.² Woe is me, I see a sign of it indeed in this, the gloomy brow and countenance of a messenger who is approaching, who will announce all that is going on.

MESSENGER 2.

O wretched me, what tale must I narrate or what words?

CREON. We are lost; thou beginnest thy tale with no smiling prelude.

MES. 2. O wretched me! doubly do I exclaim; for I endure great woes.

CREON. In addition to other woes already³ inflicted? Or what meanest thou?

MESS. 2. Thy sister's children live no longer in the light of day, Creon.

CREON. Alas!⁴ thou announcest great woes to me and to the city.

MESS. 2. O ye halls of Œdipus, hear ye these things, his children⁵ that have perished in the same calamity?

CHOR. Aye, so that they would weep, had they but sense.

² 1332-4. Creonti trib. P.

⁴ 1340. εἰ αἶ. P.

³ 1338. ἄλλα πῆμασιν λέγεις
ἔτι; P. Dost thou announce
yet other woes in addition, etc.

⁵ 1343. ante παίδων intellige
περί. P.

CREON. Woe is me, for a most illfated calamity ! woe is me unhappy on account of my woes ! O miserable that I am !

MESS. 2. Miserable indeed, if thou shouldest know also the woes that have occurred besides these.

CREON. And how could there have occurred things more illfated than these ?

MESS. 2. Thy sister is dead, with her two children.

CHOR. Lead off, lead off, a wail ! and strike upon your heads blows of your hands, inflicted by your white arms.

CREON. O wretched Jocasta ! What a termination of thy life and thy marriage hast thou endured in the riddles of the Sphinx ! But tell me too how the death of the two youths, and the accomplishment of the curse of Œdipus, has been effected ?

MESS. 2. The success of our land in front of the towers thou knowest ; for the encircling walls are not far off, so as for you not to know everything that occurred. But when the two youthful sons of the aged Œdipus, had arrayed their persons in brazen armour, they advanced and took their stations in the centre of the intervening space,⁶ [two generals, two chieftains], as for conflict, and an engagement in single fight. And Polyneices, looking towards Argos, sent forth his prayers, “O awful Hera ! for thine I am, since I have joined myself in wedlock to the daughter of Adrastus, and dwell in the land, grant me to slay my brother, and to imbrue in his blood my victorious right hand opposing him.”⁷ [I ask a most shameful crown of victory, to slay my father’s son.” And tears came into the eyes of many for the calamity, how great it was : and they looked, interchanging

⁶ 1362. om. P.

1369-71. om. P.

glances with one another.] But Eteocles looking towards the temple of Pallas with the golden shield, prayed, "O daughter of Jove, grant me to hurl out of my hand a victorious javelin into the breast of my brother, from this arm, [and to slay him who has come to destroy my country]. But when like a firebrand the note of the Tyrrhenian trumpet sounded, the signal of bloody combat, they rushed in fearful course against each other: and like wild boars gnashing their fell tusks they engaged, moistened as to their beards with foam. And they rushed on with lances; but halted, going round each other in circles, that the iron head might glide off harmlessly: and each was brandishing his lance pointed forward, wishing to be beforehand, if he should see the countenance of the other peering over the rim of his shield. But they kept their eyes carefully to the loopholes of the shields, so that the spear might be spent idly. And more copious sweat was streaming down the lookers on than the agents themselves, from fear for their friends. But Eteocles, brushing his foot against a stone, which lay in the way of his step, exposes his leg beyond the shield; and Polyneices encountered it with a dart, having observed an opportunity for a blow afforded to his weapon, and he drove the Argive javelin through the knee. And the whole host of the sons of Danaus raised a cry of joy. But while in this suffering he who was first wounded having perceived an unguarded shoulder, hurled his spear with force through the breast of Polyneices, and gave joy to the citizens of Cadmus, and broke off the tip of the dart. But being hampered by the spear he retires backwards; and having taken up a fragment of rock, he cast it from his hand, and snapped the javelin in the middle: and the fortune of the war

was equal, both having their hands deprived of the spear. Then both, grasping the hilts of their swords, came together; and clasping their shields together, they sustained all the turmoil of a conflict, moving round and round. But Eteocles introduced the Thessalian manœuvre, having the idea, I suppose, from his acquaintance with that land; for ceasing from the labour he was engaged in, his left foot indeed he whirls round backward, guarding the hollow part of the stomach in front; and advancing his right leg, he drove his sword down through the navel and fixed it in the vertebræ. And the wretched Polyneices bending together his sides and stomach, falls with gushing drops of blood. But the other, as if now victorious and having conquered in battle, having cast his sword to the ground, was spoiling him, having his attention fixed not on himself but the other, which thing also overthrew him; for Polyneices who had fallen first, having still a little breath, and preserving his sword in his woeful fall, with difficulty yet succeeded in thrusting his weapon to Eteocles' heart; and biting the earth they lie both side by side, without determining the victory.

CHOR. Alas, alas! How deeply, O Œdipus, do I groan for thy woes. And the deity seems to have fulfilled thy curses.

MESS. 2. Hear then, now, the woes also which succeed these. For when the two youths had fallen and were quitting life, in the meanwhile their wretched mother falls before them, [with ^s her virgin-daughter also, and with zealous foot.] But when she saw them wounded with fatal blows, she wailed aloud "O my children, too

late have I come to your succour.” And falling before each of her children in turn, she wept, she lamented the mighty labours of her breasts, groaning ; and their sister her companion, together with her. “ O ye twain, the support of the old age of your mother, O ye two brothers most beloved, who have betrayed my marriage.” But king Eteocles, breathing forth from his breast a painful sob heard his mother, and laying upon her his clammy hand, he uttered indeed no sound, but with his eyes he addressed her, so as to convey tokens of affection. But Polyneices was still breathing,⁹ and looking upon his sister and his aged mother, he spake thus : “ We have perished my mother ; but I pity thee and this my sister and my dead brother. For having been beloved he became an enemy, but nevertheless was he beloved. But bury me, O my mother, and thou my sister, in my native land, and pacify the incensed city, so that I may in any wise obtain thus much of the land of my fathers, even if I have lost my home. And close thou mine eyelids with thy hand, my mother, and he places it himself upon his eyes, “ And fare ye well ; for even now darkness encompasseth me.” And both together breathed forth their woeful lives. But their mother when she beheld this calamity, having suffered more than she could bear, snatched a sword from a corpse and did a dreadful deed : for through the centre of her neck she thrusts the weapon and among those she loved best she lies dead, having embraced them both in her arms. And straightway the host sprang up to a contest of words, we indeed asserting that our ruler was victorious, but they that Polyneices was so. And there was contention among the

⁹ 1442. ὅς δ' ἔτι. P. But Polyn. who was still breathing.

chieftains, some saying that Polyneices struck the first blow with his spear, but others that, both being dead, the victory was on neither side. [And in the meanwhile Antigone retired secretly from the army.] But they rushed to arms; and somehow by wise forethought the host of Cadmus was sitting furnished with shields: and we succeeded in falling upon the Argive army before it was yet arrayed in armour; and not one withstood us, but they covered the plains in flight, and streams of blood were flowing from corpses of those who were falling by the spear. But since we were victorious in fight, some indeed were erecting an image of Jove giver of victory, and others of us, stripping off the shields of the Argive corpses, were sending them as spoils within the walls; but others, with Antigone are conveying hither the corpses of the dead for their friends to bewail them. And the contents of this city have turned out in part most fortunate, but in part most unhappy.

CHOR. The ill fortune of this house will come no longer for us to hear only: for we may even now behold here before the palace the corpses of the three who are dead, who have obtained an eternity of darkness by a common lot of death.

ANTIGONE.

The delicacy of my cheek where ringlets cluster is unveiled, and not even calling up from maiden modesty the red blood to my cheeks, a blush suffusing my countenance, I am hurried along, a bacchanal of corpses, having cast away the veil from my locks, having neglected the saffron array of luxury, I, a woeful conductor of the dead. Alas, woe is me! O Polyneices, rightly then wast thou named, woe is me, O Thebes! for thy strife which was not strife, but murder on murder hath destroyed the house

of Œdipus, having been consummated with fearful bloodshed, with woeful bloodshed. But what groan in harmony with grief, or what tuneful lament shall I invoke, upon tears, upon tears, I who bare these three kindred slain, mother and children, joys of the avenging Fury? She who destroyed utterly the house of Œdipus from the time when he had understanding to interpret the song hard to be understood, of the Sphinx, that fell minstrel; depriving her body of life. Woe is me, O my father! What Grecian woman or what barbarian or who else of the nobly born of old time, of mortal blood, hath ever endured such manifest woes of so great evils as I wretched bewail? What bird, then, sitting amid the boughs of the topmost foliage of an oak or a pine will be responsive to the woes, [the lamentations] of me bereft of my mother? I who with these wailings¹ weep aloud the lament, in solitude about to pass a life for ever in gushing tears. Whom shall I lament? On whom first shall I cast first-offerings with locks rent from my hair? On my mother's two breasts that gave me suck, or upon the unhappy mangled corpses of my two brothers? Woe woe! leave thy abode, bringing out thy sightless eyes, mine aged father! Show forth, O Œdipus, thy miserable old age, thou who within the palace, having inflicted misty darkness on thine eyes, draggest out a prolonged existence. Hearest thou, O thou wandering through the hall, reposing thine aged illfated foot upon a couch?

ŒDIPUS.

Wherefore, O virgin, hast thou drawn me forth, leaning

¹ 1517. ὀδυρμοῖς. This word is rejected by Hermann and Dind. as being merely a gloss

on ἄχρειν. The latter suggests ἡξει or ἔσται in its place.

on the prop of a sightless foot, into the light from out my murky chamber, with thy most pitiable tears, me, that am bedridden, a gray dim phantom of upper air, or a corpse from below, or a winged dream?

ANT. Thou wilt hear hapless tidings, O my father, thy children no longer behold the light of day, no, nor thy wife, she who beside thy staff² ever with constant attendance laboured for thy sightless foot, O my father, woe is me!

ŒD. Woe is me for my calamities! For we have cause to bewail³ these things, to cry aloud! Three lives, by what fate, how, left they the light of day, O my child, tell me?

ANT. Not for reproach, much less for exultation, but in grief I say it; thy Avenger mighty with swords and with fire and merciless combats came upon thy children, O my father, woe is me!⁴

ŒD. Alas!

ANT. Wherefore lamentest thou these things?

ŒD. O my children!

ANT. Thou wouldst have felt grief, if, looking upon the chariot of the Sun with its four coursers, thou hadst cast the glances of thine eyes over these dead corpses.

ŒD. Of my children indeed the calamity is manifest; but my illfated wife, tell me my child, by what fate did she perish?

ANT. Exhibiting openly tears of lamentation to all,

² 1548-9. παραβάκτροις. P. sc. θεραπέυμασιν — with services as of a staff.

Ibid. θεραπέυμασιν ἐμβόχθει ad sensum idem est quod ἐθεράπευε; hinc accu-

sativus additur πῶδα σόν.

ΜΑΤΤΗ.

³ 1551. καὶ τὰδ' αὐτεῖν. P. We have cause to wail, and to cry aloud for these things.

⁴ 1559. ὦμοι Œdipo trib. P.

having⁵ exposed her suppliant breast, a suppliant she bore it, she bore it towards her children. But in the Electran gate the mother found her children, upon the trefoil-bearing meadow, like lions that dwell in dens, engaged in mutual combat with lances, for gory wounds ; already a cold libation of gore, which Hades received for his portion, but Ares assigned it to him. But she having snatched a sword of beaten brass from the corpses plunged it within her body, and in woe for her offspring fell upon her children. And all these miseries, O my father, the God hath in this one day brought together upon one house, whoever he is who thus accomplishes them.

CHOR. This day hath been the beginning of many woes to the house of Œdipus ; but may the rest of his life be more fortunate.

CREON.

Cease ye indeed now from your wailings ; for it is time to take order for the burial : and do thou, Œdipus, hearken to these words. Eteocles thy son gave to me the dominion of this land, giving to Hæmon a marriage portion and the bed of thy daughter Antigone. I will not therefore suffer thee to dwell any longer in the land ; for Teiresias announced distinctly that while thou wast inhabiting this land, the city would never prosper. But convey thyself out. And this I say not to insult thee, nor yet as being thy foe, but by reason of the Avengers that haunt thee, fearing lest the land meet with some calamity.

ŒD. O Faté ! from the very commencement how

⁵ 1569. ἀρομένα. Verum videtur ἀρομένα de quo scholiasta ; γράφεται δὲ καὶ ὀρομένα,

ὃ ἐστὶν ὀροήουσα καὶ προτεινούσα τὸν μαστόν.—DIND.

hapless didst thou produce me [and wretched, if any other of mortals is so]; me, of whom even before I came into light from my mother's womb, while yet unborn, Apollo did predict to Laius that I should become the murderer of my father. O wretched me! And then when I was born, my father again who begat me strives to slay me, deeming that I was born his foe: for it was fated that he should die by my hand; and he sends me forth, desiring the breast, to be a ⁶ woeful prey to wild beasts: and there I am saved alive. Aye, would that Cithæron had descended into the yawning abyss of Tartarus, for that he destroyed me not, but gave me over also to be a slave about the person ⁷ of my master Polybus. And having slain my father, I, the illfated one, entered the bed of my wretched mother; and begat children who were my brothers, whom I destroyed, having inherited curses from Laius and transmitted them to my children. For never was I by nature so without understanding as to have devised these things against my own eyes and the lives of my children, except through the influence of some god. Well, be it so. What then am I the illfated one to do? Who will accompany me, the guide of my sightless foot? This woman, who is dead? Were she but living I know well she would. Or my pair of gallant sons? But they no longer live for me. Or am I still young, and can I find even ⁸ sustenance? From whence? Why dost thou slay me thus utterly, Creon? For thou wilt slay me if thou shalt cast me forth from the land. In no wise however by clasping

⁶ 1603. ἄθλιον. P. me wretched.

⁷ 1607. δαίμων ἔδωκε Πόλυβον ἀμφὶ δεσπότην. P. and the

deity gave me to be a slave, etc.

⁸ 1619. αὐτός. P. can I find sustenance for myself?

my arms about thy knee will I debase myself; for my noble birth of old I will not betray, no, not even in that adversity as now.

CREON. Both thou hast spoken well, that thou wilt not touch my knees, and I will not suffer thee to dwell in the land. But of these corpses, the one indeed ye must straightway carry into the palace, but this other, who ⁹ came with others to sack his native city, the corpse of Polyneices, cast ye unburied forth from the boundaries of this land. And this proclamation shall be made to all the Cadmeans, that whoever shall be detected either in bedecking this corpse or in burying it in the earth, shall receive death in return: ¹ [but that they let it be, unwept, unburied, a prey for birds]. But do thou, Antigone, ceasing thy wailings for the three who are dead, convey thyself into the palace, and remain in thy maiden chambers expecting the coming day, on which the bed of Hæmon awaits thee.

ANT. O my father, in what evils are we wretched involved! Be assured, I groan for thee more than for the dead. For it is not one part of thy woe that is grievous, and another not grievous, but in all alike thou hast been hapless, O my father! But thee I ask, our new ruler, why insultest thou this my father, by banishing him from the land? Why makest thou laws upon a wretched corpse?

CREON. These are the decrees of Eteocles, not mine.

ANT. Aye, senseless decrees, and a fool thou, who hast obeyed them.

CREON. How? Is it not just to execute what is enjoined?

⁹ 1628-9. δ', ὅς—ἡλθε om.

νέκυν 1628.

P. ut sit τὸν δέ—Πολυνείκους

¹ 1634. om. P.

ANT. No, at least if what is enjoined is base, and evilly commanded.

CREON. What? Will not this man with justice be thrown to the dogs?

ANT. No, for ye are not exacting from him a legal penalty.

CREON. Aye, but we are, if he was, as he was, a foe to the city, not being naturally its foe.

ANT. Therefore it was he entrusted his fortune to the chance of war.

CREON. Let him then ² suffer the penalty by remaining unburied.

ANT. Having done what wrong, if he came to recover his share of the land?

CREON. This man shall be unburied, that thou mayest know.

ANT. I will bury him, even though the city forbid it.

CREON. Thou wilt bury thyself then by the side of this corpse.

ANT. But in sooth 'tis glorious for two friends to lie side by side.

CREON. Seize this woman and convey her into the palace.

ANT. Not so indeed, for I will not loose my hold on this corpse.

CREON. The deity hath decreed, O virgin, not what seems good to thee.

ANT. This also hath been decreed, that the dead be not insulted.

CREON. Be assured, that no one shall cast moist earth upon this man.

² 1654. τῷ τάφῳ. τῇ ἀταφίᾳ. Schæf. Ibid. νῦν. P. 'now.'—

ANT. Yea, I beseech thee, by this my mother Jocasta, Creon—

CREON. Thou art losing thy pains; for thou shalt not obtain this.

ANT. But do thou at least permit me to pour libations over the corpse.

CREON. This would be one of the things forbidden by the state.

ANT. But permit me to bind bandages about his fell wounds.

CREON. It is not possible for thee to pay honours to this corpse.

ANT. O most beloved, but at least I will kiss thy mouth.

CREON. Thou wilt not gain an impediment to thy marriage by thy wailings.

ANT. What, shall I be married while I live ever to a son of thine?

CREON. 'Tis compulsory.³ Whither wilt thou escape his bed?

ANT. That night, then, shall find me one of the daughters of Danaus.

CREON. Hast thou heard what an audacious insult she has cast in my teeth?

ANT. Let the weapon be my witness and the sword I swear by.

CREON. But why art thou so over-desirous to be rid this marriage?

ANT. I will go into exile with this my most wretched father.

CREON. There resides in thee a generous spirit, but some little folly.

³ 1674. πολλή σ'. P. 'Tis compulsory on thee.

ANT. Aye, and I will die with him, that thou mayest know further.

CREON. Go, thou shalt not murder my son ; quit the land.

ŒD. O my daughter, I praise thee indeed for thy zealous affection—

ANT. ⁴ But if I were to marry, and thou wert to go alone into exile, my father—

ŒD. Stay and be happy. With mine own evils I will be content.

ANT. Who, then, will tend thee who art blind, my father ?

ŒD. Falling where it is my fate, I shall lie upon the plain.

ANT. And where then is Œdipus, and his famous riddles ?

ŒD. They have perished. One day made me prosperous and one day ruined me.

ANT. Therefore it is my duty also to share in thy woes.

ŒD. Exile is disgraceful for a daughter, in company with a blind father.

ANT. No, not to a virtuous daughter, but 'tis noble, my father.

ŒD. Lead me then forward, that I may touch thy mother.

ANT. ⁵ Here, touch with thy hand an aged woman most dear to thee.

ŒD. O my mother, O my most wretched yoke-fellow !

ANT. Pitiab! she lies, enduring all evils together.

⁴ Post 1684. interrog. distinct. P.—But if —?

⁵ 1694. φιλάττη. P. with thy most loved hand.

ŒD. And where are the corpses of Eteocles and Polyneices ?

ANT. Here they both lie, stretched out before thee, side by side.

ŒD. Set my sightless hand upon their ill-fated visages.

ANT. Here, grasp in thy hand thy slain children.

ŒD. O ye beloved, woeful corpses ! sons of a woeful sire !

ANT. O name of Polyneices, in sooth most dear to me !

ŒD. Now, O my child, the oracle of Loxias is arriving at its fulfilment.

ANT. What oracle ? What, wilt thou tell of woes upon woes ?

ŒD. That I, in my wanderings, shall die in Athens.

ANT. Where ? What tower of Attic land will receive thee ?

ŒD. Sacred Colonus, and the temple of the horseman god. But come, minister to me thine aged sire, since thou art zealous to share in this my exile.

ANT. Go forth into wretched exile. Stretch forth thy loved hand, my aged father, leaving me to conduct thee, like a ship-speeding gale.

ŒD. Lo, I journey forward, my child ; do thou become the woeful guide of my steps.

ANT. Aye, I have become, I have become most woeful in sooth of all Theban virgins.

ŒD. Whither do I set mine aged footstep ? bring me support, O my child !

ANT. This way, this way, advance, this way, [this way] set down thy foot, my ⁶ father, for thou hast the strength as it were of a dream.

⁶ 1721. *πάτερ* om. P.

ŒD. Woe, woe, for most hapless exile!⁷ Thou who art expelling me in my old age from my country! Woe, woe! for me who have endured fearful fearful things!

ANT. Endured what? endured what? Justice beholds not the vile, nor does she requite the foolish acts of mortals.

ŒD. I am he who ascended upon the heavenly song of glorious victory, having discovered the riddle of the virgin, hard to be interpreted.

ANT. Dost thou recall the reproach of the Sphinx? Away with mention of thy former prosperity! For these pitiful calamities were awaiting thee, that, having become an exile from thy country, O my father, somewhere thou shouldest die. Leaving behind tears of regret with beloved virgins, I am about to depart far from my native land, wandering in unmaidenly sort.

ŒD. Oh how great is the advantage of wisdom!

ANT. Aye, with respect to my father's calamities it shall render me glorious. Wretched am I, moreover,⁸ for the wrong done to my brother, who is cast forth from his home, an unburied corpse, the miserable one! whom, even if I must die, my father, in darkness I will bury⁹ beneath the earth.

ŒD. Show thyself to thy comrades.

ANT. There has been enough of my wailings.

ŒD. But do thou offer thy supplications at the altars.

ANT. Having satiety of my miseries.

⁷ 1724. ἐλαύνειν P. The driving, &c.

wrongs of my brother."

⁸ 1744. σου, συγγόνου θ'. P. "wretched—for thee, and the

⁹ 1747. σκορία. P. "In the dark earth."—

ÆD. But go where Bromius dwells, and where is the inviolate enclosure of Bacchanals on the mountains.

ANT. To him, for whom I, arrayed in Cadmean fawn-skins in old time led off the holy dance of Semele, on the mountains, conferring a thankless honour on the gods?

ÆD. O ye citizens of a glorious fatherland, behold, this man is Œdipus, I who discovered the famous riddles and was greatest of men I who alone subdued the might of the bloodthirsty Sphinx, now myself dishonoured, pitiable, am driven forth from the land. But why do I bewail these things, and lament in vain? For being a mortal I must bear the necessities imposed by the gods.

[CHOR. ¹O victory greatly venerated, mayest thou dwell with me through my life and never cease crowning me with chaplets.]

¹ 1764. See note to Orestes, 1691.



ORESTES.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ELECTRA.

HELEN.

HERMIONE.

CHORUS.

ORESTES.

MENELAUS.

TYNDAREUS.

PYLADES.

MESSSENGER.

A PHRYGIAN.

APOLLO.

ARGUMENT.

ORESTES, avenging the murder of his father, slew Ægisthus and Clytæmnestra ; but having dared to commit matricide, straightway he suffered the punishment, being visited with madness. And Tyndareus the father of her who had been slain, having brought an accusation against him, the Argives were about to pass a vote of the people, as to what he ought to suffer who had committed an act of impiety ; but Menelaus having by chance returned from his wanderings, sent Helen indeed by night into the palace, but by day arrived himself. And being called by Orestes to his succour, he rather respected Tyndareus, who spoke on the other side ; and when the causes had been pleaded before the populace, the majority was eager to put Orestes to death.

¹and Pylades his friend siding with these,² counselled him first to take vengeance on Menelaus by slaying Helen. They however having made the attempt failed of their design, the gods having carried Helen away. But Electra put Hermione, who had made her appearance, into their hands ; and they were about to put her to death, when Menelaus appeared, and, seeing that he was being deprived by them of his wife and daughter at once, resolved to force the palace : but they were beforehand with him and threatened to set it on fire. But Apollo appearing announced that he was carrying Helen off to the gods ; and commanded Orestes to take Hermione to wife, and to give Electra in marriage to Pylades, and, when purified of his bloodguiltiness, to rule over Argos.

The scene of the drama is supposed to be in Argos ; and the chorus consists of Argive women, of the same age with Electra ; who come on the stage also inquiring about the sufferings of Orestes. And Electra speaks the prologue. The drama, however, has its catastrophe rather adapted to comedy. And the scenery of

¹ This hiatus is filled up in two codd., but, according to P., not satisfactorily. (1) ὁ καὶ ἐπαγγειλάμενος αὐτὸς ποιῆσαι, ἐκ τοῦ βίου προῖσθαι. (2.) ἐπαγγειλάμενον αὐτὸν

ἐκ τοῦ βίου προῖσθαι. (*i. e.* "who announced that he would put himself to death with his own hand") ;—

² τούτοις. om. P.

the drama is thus: Orestes is discovered before the palace of Agamemnon, sick and lying on a couch, from madness; and Electra is sitting at his feet. But there is a question why in the world she is not sitting at his head; for the rather thus would she have seemed to be regardful of her brother, by sitting nearer ³ to him. The poet seems then to have contrived thus on account of the chorus; for Orestes would have been disturbed, having but lately fallen asleep and that hardly, if the women who compose the chorus had been standing nearer to him. And we may guess this from what Electra says to the chorus, "Hist! hist! lightly set down the tread of thy shoe." It is credible, therefore, that this was the reason of such an arrangement. The drama is of those in good repute upon the stage: but in moral sentiment it is the worst; for, except Pylades, all the characters were vicious.



ANOTHER ARGUMENT.⁴

WHEN Greece went forth against the Trojans, Agamemnon was chosen commander-in-chief of the whole armament, inasmuch as he was considered to surpass the rest both in extent of dominion and number of ships; for he contributed an hundred ships to the confederation of the army. And when about to set sail he leaves behind him Ægisthus as manager and guardian of his affairs at home. But when a long period elapsed and Agamemnon did not yet return home, then, as indeed it frequently happens, Ægisthus had an illicit connection with Clytæmnestra, Agamemnon's wife. But when Clytæmnestra and Ægisthus heard that Troy was taken, and that Agamemnon with the rest was sailing homewards, they devise a plan to slay him, when he should have taken possession of his house, so that they might not, when their crime was made known to him, be given over to death themselves; and this plan, then, they accomplished. And when Agamemnon had returned home, they slew him; for after the bath they put on him a tunic which had no outlets for the head and hands, and they murdered him with an axe. However, during the murder of Agamemnon, Electra, having stolen away her brother Orestes, that he also might

³ τούτῳ παρακαθεζομένη
πλησιαιτέρον. P.

⁴ Omitted by P.

not perish, and having committed him to the charge of a certain pedagogue, sends him to Phocis, to the house of Strophius, who was a friend and kinsman of her father. And Orestes, when he arrived at manhood, taking with him Pylades the son of Strophius, that with him he might avenge himself on Ægisthus and Clytæmnestra, returns secretly to Argos; and having received a response from Pythian Apollo that he should do this, he first proceeds to the tomb of his father and offers sacrifice; and then contrives this plan.

The pedagogue, to whom he had been entrusted long since by Electra and who had arrived, as we said above, at Phocis, this pedagogue he sends before him, to Ægisthus and Clytæmnestra, with news that Orestes had been killed in the Pythian games, and that messengers were then bringing his bones in a coffer, that he might, at any rate, share the tomb of his fathers. And Clytæmnestra and Ægisthus being led on by this stratagem, (that I may not make a long story of it) are put to death by Orestes and Pylades, first Clytæmnestra and afterwards Ægisthus. Orestes then having committed matricide, straightway suffers the penalty at the hands of the Erinyes, being afflicted with madness. And Menelaus having returned from Troy, (for he arrived home later than Agamemnon) and putting in at the harbour of Nauplia, by night indeed sends Helen into Mycenæ, but by day entered himself; and finding Orestes mad, he is entreated by Orestes and Electra to save their lives. For Tyndareus the father of Clytæmnestra had stirred up all the Argives against them, that they might put them to death as matricides. But Menelaus when he found Tyndareus opposing them, and at the same time took it himself into account that if Orestes were put to death he should himself be king of Argos, refused to aid Orestes and his sister, but said that he feared the people of Argos. First then, Orestes and Tyndareus reasoned against each other, the latter attempting to show that he had not slain Clytæmnestra with justice, but Orestes that he had done so with all justice, since she deserved ten thousand deaths. Then an assembly being held in the citadel of Mycenæ, and, the chief men of Argos having come together, Orestes is carried thither by Pylades in a litter. After many opinions had been delivered, and some in favour of Orestes, while others were against him, at last the worst prevailed; and Orestes is condemned with his sister to

die by stoning: but Orestes announced to the people that he would put himself and his sister to death with his own hand. Now his friend Pylades both remained a friend to him during his misfortunes, and claimed most zealously to share in his death: and since it was determined for them to suffer this, Pylades advises that they should first take vengeance on Menelaus, saying that "he should not live in luxury while we are gone hence;" wherefore having entered the palace under the pretence of wishing to entreat Helen not to suffer them to perish but to stretch forth her hand, and urge Menelaus though unwilling to preserve them; when they were about to put her to death, her indeed they failed of finding, for she had been carried off by Apollo at the command of Jove, but they seize Hermione who had returned from the tomb of Clytæmnestra; for Helen had sent her some time before, to offer sacrifices to her sister. Having seized Hermione there and made sure the gates of the palace within, they went to an upper part of the palace, holding Hermione and a sword at her throat; and intending after having made away with her, in case Menelaus would not save their lives, to consume the building with fire. Menelaus accordingly learning from these that Helen was dead, so that he may by his coming perchance preserve his own child, began to force the palace. But Apollo appearing reconciled them; declaring that he had carried away Helen up to heaven, and bidding Menelaus take another wife, and unite Hermione to Orestes after he should be purified of the murder; which purification he obtained at Athens where he was tried with the Erinyes at the mount of Mars. On this occasion also, when he was about to be condemned by all the gods, Minerva by throwing in her vote brought him off victorious: and thus Orestes afterwards marries Hermione according to the oracle of Apollo, and rules over Argos; moreover, he bestows Electra on Pylades, to whom also she had been previously betrothed by him.

But we must observe that every tragedy has its end consistent with its beginning: for from grief it begins and with grief it ends. But the present drama, from being tragic, becomes comic; for it concludes with the reconciliations effected by Apollo, after calamity terminating in happiness; and the comedy is interwoven with jokes and merriment.

ORESTES.

ELECTRA.

1—17.]

THERE is no word so fearful of utterance, no suffering is there, nor calamity sent by the wrath of the gods, the burden whereof man's nature cannot endure. For he who was blessed (and I reproach not his misfortunes), Tantalus, son of Jove, as they tell, flits in mid air dreading the rock that impends over his head; and this penalty he pays (as indeed they say), because being but a mortal, yet having the same honour as the gods at their common table, he had an unchastened tongue, the foulest pest of all. This man was the father of Pelops and from him was Atreus sprung, for whom the goddess having carded out the thread of his destiny spun him forth strife,¹ that he should engage in war with Thyestes who was his brother. Why need I recall those crimes unspeakable? Atreus, then, having murdered his children feasted him on them; and from Atreus, for I pass over the misfortunes which intervene, was sprung Agamemnon

¹ 12. Clotho colum retinet, Lachesis net, et Atropos occat.

the renowned, if indeed he be renowned, and Menelaus, from Aërope their mother of Crete. Now Menelaus married Helen, her abhorred of the gods, while prince Agamemnon shared the bed of Clytæmnestra, notorious among the Greeks : and to him from that one wife were born we three virgins, Chrysothemis and Iphigeneia and myself Electra, and a male child Orestes : born from a most unholy mother, who having entangled her husband in a robe whence was no outlet slew him ; but for what reason, it were not becoming for a virgin to narrate ; I let this pass in obscurity, for men to consider it in public. But the injustice of Phœbus why need I accuse ? for he persuades Orestes to slay my mother who bore him, a deed which brings not good fame to all men ; but nevertheless he slew her, not disobeying the god : and I likewise took part, as far as a woman could, in the slaughter, and Pylades, who had wrought these deeds with us. And thenceforth pining away with a fell disease the wretched Orestes lies sick ; and reclining on a couch helies, and the blood of his mother whirls round his brain with frenzy ; for I refrain in reverence from naming the goddesses, the Eumenides, who drive him frantic with terror. This is now the sixth day since our mother, having died by bloodshed, hath been purified by the funeral fire, during which he hath neither taken food down his throat, nor washed his body with water ; but lying hid beneath his garments, when indeed his frame is relieved from disease, then being of sane mind he weeps ; but sometimes forth from his coverlets he leaps with headlong speed, like a courser freed from the yoke. And it hath seemed good to this city of Argos that none shall receive us under their roofs nor at the fire of their hearths, and that none shall hold converse with us the

matricides ; this too is the appointed day on which the city of the Argives is to pass a decree whether we must both die by stoning with stones, or plunge a sharpened sword into our necks. But now indeed we have some hope that we shall not die ; for Menelaus hath arrived at this land from Troy, and filling the port of Nauplia with his barks, he anchors off the shore, having wandered a long time in erring course from Troy ; and already he hath sent before him to our home Helen the cause of many a sigh, waiting for the night that none of those whose children have fallen under the walls of Troy might, if they saw her coming by day, proceed to stone her ; and she is within, bewailing her sister and the calamities of our house. But she has now indeed some consolation for her griefs ; for the virgin whom Menelaus left at home when he sailed for Troy and entrusted to my mother to bring up, having brought her from Sparta, Hermione I mean, in her she rejoices and forgets her woes. But I am looking forth in every direction, when I shall discern the arrival of Menelaus ; for as regards aught else we ride on an anchor of unstable strength, save only if in some way we be preserved by his means ; a powerless thing is an illfated house.

HELEN. O thou daughter of Clytæmnestra and of Agamemnon, Electra, thou who art still a virgin through so great a length of time, how, O wretched one, farest thou and how thy brother the wretched Orestes, this matricide here ? For I deem not myself polluted by thy converse, transferring the fault to Phœbus. And yet I bewail at least the fate of Clytæmnestra my sister, whom since I sailed to Ilium as I did sail in frenzy ordained of heaven, I have never beheld, but bereft of her I lament her misfortunes.

ELEC. Helen, why need I tell thee what being present thou seest, that the race of Agamemnon is involved in calamities? I indeed sit here sleepless, by the side of a miserable corpse,—for a corpse this man is, save for a little breathing; but his woes I mention not with reproach. But thou who art happy, and thy happy spouse, ye twain have come to us who are in woeful plight.

HEL. And for how long a time has he been lying here on his couch.

ELEC. Ever since he shed a parent's blood.

HEL. O miserable he, and miserable his mother, how hath he perished!

ELEC. So these things are, that he has² sunk beneath his woes.

HEL. In the name of the gods, wouldest thou then do me a kindness, O damsel?

ELEC. Yea, so long at least as I am not occupied by attendance³ on my brother.

HEL. Art thou willing to go for me to the tomb of my sister?

ELEC. Biddest thou me go to the tomb of my mother? For what purpose?

HEL. Bearing the first offerings of my hair and libations from me.

ELEC. And is it not lawful for thyself to go to the tomb of those thou lovest?

HEL. Aye, for I am ashamed to shew myself to the Argives.

² 91. ἀπείρηκεν. P. approved by Dind.

³ 93. προσεδρία. P. προσε-

δρία malè excusum pro προσεδρία.—DIND.

ELEC. 'Tis late, at least, that thou art wise, who didst then leave shamefully thine home.

HEL. Thou hast spoken aright, but not in friendly sort to me.

ELEC. And hast thou then any shame with respect to them of Mycenæ?

HEL. I fear the sires of the dead under the walls of Ilium.

ELEC. Aye, 'tis a matter of fear : for thou art cried out upon in Argos through every mouth.

HEL. Do thou then grant me a favour, by freeing me from this fear.

ELEC. I could not bear to look upon the tomb of my mother?

HEL. Yet at least it is disgraceful that attendants should bear these offerings.

ELEC. But why sendest thou not thy daughter Hermione?

HEL. 'Tis not seemly for virgins to go amongst a crowd.

ELEC. And yet she might at least repay to the dead *the care of her education*.

HEL. Well hast thou said, and I will obey thee, damsel, and I will send my daughter ; for in sooth thou speakest well. O my child, come forth, Hermione, before the palace, and take these libations and locks of my hair in thy hand ; and when thou art come to the tomb of Clytæmnestra, pour forth libations of honey and milk and mantling wine ; and standing upon the summit of the mound speak these words—"Helen thy sister offers thee these libations in fear of approaching thy sepulchre and dreading the multitude of the Argives." And bid her have gracious feelings towards me and thee and my husband, and this woeful pair whom the god

hath destroyed. And promise all the gifts offered to those below, which it is right that I should accomplish for my sister. Go, my child, be quick, and having bestowed libations on the tomb, remember with all speed thy backward road.

ELEC. O human nature, how great a curse art thou to mortals, and a saving boon to them who possess thee with honour! ⁴ Saw ye how she cropt her locks at the very tips, preserving her beauty? But she is the same woman as of old. May the god hate thee, inasmuch as thou hast ruined me and this man, and all Greece. Wretch that I am! Hither again appear my friends responsive to my wailings; perchance they will disturb from sleep him who is at rest here, and will melt away mine eye with tears, when I see my brother frantic. O women most beloved, advance with silent step, make no noise, nor let there be any sound: for your friendship is indeed kindly to me, but 'twill be a misfortune to me to disturb this man. Hist! hist! set lightly to earth the tread of your shoe, make no noise, nor let there be any sound. Go ye I pray afar, thither, afar from the couch.

CHORUS. Lo, I obey.

ELEC. Hush, hush, like ⁵ the breathing of the delicate reed-pipe, speak to me, loved one.

CHOR. Hark, how I utter the soft note ⁶ of the reed.

⁴ 128. εἶδετε παρ' ἄκρας κ.τ.λ.; ἴδετε γὰρ ἄκρας κ.τ.λ. P. for see how she has cropped the extremities of her hair, etc.

⁵ 145. ὅπως πνοά. ὡς πνοιά. P.

⁶ 147. ὑπόροφον. Matthiæ considers the derivation from ὄροφος a reed to be "nuga grammaticorum": and translates it like ὑπόροφος (=ὑπό-

στεγος Hesych.) "vox quæ sub tecto editur:" and the whole passage "cum leni voce domum intro."—H. Steph. explains it, "vox quæ sub tecto domus continetur, nec extra a quoquam exaudiri potest"—and therefore, "gentle." It may perhaps signify, "such a voice as one uses in a room, as opposed to open air speaking."

ELEC. Aye, thus approach, approach ; draw near silently, silently advance ; tell me for what purpose ye are come ; for this man now for some time has been lulled in rest, reclining.

CHOR. How fares he ? Communicate thy words to us, beloved one.

ELEC. What misfortune must I tell ? or what calamity ? He still breathes, and groans but little.

CHOR. What sayest thou, O wretched one ?

ELEC. Thou wilt destroy him if thou stir his eyelids while he enjoys the sweet boon of sleep.

CHOR. Wretched he, for most hostile deeds performed by the gods. Miserable man, alas for his sufferings !

ELEC. ⁷ Unjust was he who at that time then uttered words of injustice, uttered them when Loxias upon the tripod of Themis decreed the ⁸ unnatural murder of my mother.

CHOR. Seest thou ? He moves his body within the coverlets.

ELEC. Aye, for 'tis thou, wretched one, who by thy cries hast stirred him up from sleep.

CHOR. Methought, however, he slept.

ELEC. Wilt thou not from us, wilt thou not from the palace move thy foot swiftly back again, ceasing from thy din ?

CHOR. He slumbers.

ELEC. Thou sayest well.

CHOR. O awful, awful night, the giver of sleep to mortals of many toils, come from the realms of darkness, haste, haste with winged flight to the house of Aga-

⁷ 162. ἀ ἀ ἄδικος. κ. τ. λ. P. fausta cædes. DIND.

⁸ 163. φόνος ἀπόφονος, in-

memnon ; for with griefs and calamities we are utterly sped, we are sped.

ELEC. Ye have caused a din.⁹ Wilt thou not in silence, in silence keeping the vociferations of thy mouth far from his couch, grant him the gentle¹ boon of repose, my friend ?

CHOR. Tell us, what issue of his sufferings awaits him ?

ELEC. Death, death ;² what else should ? For he hath not even desire of sustenance.

CHOR. His fate then is manifest beforehand.

ELEC. 'Twas Phœbus utterly destroyed us, when he permitted the wretched, unnatural murder of our mother, the slayer of our sire.

CHOR. Justly, indeed, but not honourably.

ELEC. Thou art dead, thou art dead, O my mother, who didst bring me forth, and thou hast destroyed my father and these children of thine own blood. We have perished dying by the same death,³ we have perished. For both thou art among the dead, and the greater⁴ part of my life hath passed away in groanings and wailings and nightly tears. Look upon me, for I wretched, unmarried, childless, drag on my life as ever.

CHOR. Take care, thou virgin Electra, who art present by his side, that thy brother here be not dead without thy knowledge ; for he pleases me not with his excessive languor.

⁹ 182. ΗΛ. κτύπον ἡγάγετ'.
XO. οὐχί. ΗΛ. σίγα κ. τ. λ. i. e.
EL. Ye have caused a din.
CHOR. Nay. EL. By keeping
in silence, in silence the vociferations etc. thou wilt grant him etc.

¹ 186. χάριν. χαράν. P. The

calm joy—

² 188. θανεῖν once in P.

³ 200. ὁλόμεθ' ὁλόμεθ' ἴσονέκυε. dying both by the same death. P.

⁴ 202. βίου τὸ πλεον· πλεον βιώτου. P.

ORESTES. O thou fond charm of sleep, protector against disease, how sweetly hast thou come to me and in my need! O awful oblivion of my woes, how wise art thou, and a goddess to be entreated of the unhappy! Whence ever came I hither? and how did I arrive? for I am in forgetfulness, having been deprived of my former senses.

ELEC. O my dearest brother, how thou didst gladden me, by falling into slumber. Dost thou wish me to touch thee, and raise up thy body?

ORES. Yea, lay hold, lay hold upon me, and wipe away the clotted foam from my wretched mouth and from my eyes.

ELEC. Lo the grateful service, and I refuse not to tend a brother's limbs with a sister's hand.

ORES. Support my side with thine, and remove the squalid hair from my brow; for I see but little with mine eyes.

ELEC. O wretched head, filthy in thy curls, how wild hast thou become from long absence from the bath.

ORES. Recline me again on the couch; when the plague⁵ of madness leaves me free, I am unhinged and have no strength in my limbs.

ELEC. There—the bed in sooth is pleasant to a sick man; being a thing painful indeed to keep, but necessary for all that.

ORES. Raise me again upright, turn my body round.⁶ The sick are hard to please from their helplessness.

ELEC. Wilt thou also set thy feet upon the ground,

⁵ 228. *μανίας* *μ'*. P. The accent of *μανίας* is uncertain: but however accented it should be taken as an *adjective*. If a

substantive, the construction is "whenever my malady leaves me free from madness."

⁶ 232. P. attributes to Chorus.

putting to earth thy footstep after a long interval? Change in all things is sweet.

ORES. Assuredly: for this carries with it the appearance of health; and even the appearance is an improvement, though it be far from the truth.

ELEC. Hear me then, O my brother, while the Erinyes permit thee to enjoy thy reason.

ORES. Wilt thou tell me any news? if indeed it is good, thou bringest what is grateful; but if it tend to any mischief I have enough of unhappiness.

ELEC. Menelaus has arrived, thy father's brother, and [the benches of] his ships are at anchor in Nauplia.

ORES. What sayest thou? Has he appeared, a light in my calamities and thine, a man of kindred blood and who is under obligation to my father?

ELEC. He has come; receive this part of my news as certain, bringing home Helen from the walls of Troy.

ORES. Had he been preserved alone he had been the more enviable; but if he brings home his wife, he has come accompanied by a mighty curse.

ELEC. Tyndareus hath produced a family of daughters notorious for censure, and of bad repute throughout Greece.

ORES. Be thou then different from the base; for it is in thy power; and not only say these words but entertain these sentiments.

ELEC. Woe is me, my brother, thy countenance is disturbed, and quickly hast thou changed to madness, being but now of sane mind.

ORES. O my mother, I implore thee, set not on me the virgins (*i. e.* furies) bloody to behold, and of dragon form; for these, these are leaping near me.

ELEC. Stay, thou wretched one, quietly on thy couch;

for thou seest nought of what thou fanciest thou hast clearly seen.

ORES. O Phœbus, the dread goddesses, hound-faced, fierce-visaged priestesses of Hades, will slay me.

ELEC. In sooth I will not let thee go ; but entwining my hands about thee, I will restrain thee from taking these ill omened leaps.

ORES. Let me go ; being one of the Erinyes, thou gripest me by the waist, that thou mayest hurl me into Tartarus.

ELEC. Woe is me, wretched ! What succour may I obtain since we have found the deity a foe ?

ORES. Give me my bow of horn, the gift of Loxias, wherewith Apollo bade me ward off the goddesses if they should terrify me with frantic madness !

ELEC. ⁷ And will any of the gods be struck by mortal hand ?

ORES. If she pass not away from my sight. Hear ye not ? see ye not the winged shafts of the far darting bow starting from the string ? Ha ! ha ! Why then do ye linger ? Skim the heights of ether with your pinions, and arraign the oracles of Phœbus.—Well.—Wherefore am I thus agitated, exhaling the breath from my lungs ? Whither, whither I pray have I rushed from my couch ? For after a tempest again again I behold a calm. My sister, why weepest thou, putting thy head within thy robes ? I am ashamed at making thee a partaker of my sufferings, and of troubling a virgin with my malady. Pine not away by reason of my woes ; for thou indeed didst consent to these things, but by me was

⁷ 271. Continuandus hic versus Oresti, commate post $\chi\epsilon\rho\iota$ posito. Dind. ORES. One of

the gods will be, &c., unless thou etc.

the murder of our mother accomplished ; but Loxias I blame, who having incited me ⁸ to a most unholy deed with his words indeed encouraged me, but by 'his deeds in no wise. But I ween that my father, had I inquired of him face to face whether I ought to slay my mother, would have uttered many earnest prayers by this my beard, that I should not thrust a sword into the throat of her who bore me, if by the deed neither he was to regain the light of day, and I the hardened one was to fulfil such woes as these. But now uncover thy face, O my sister, and give over weeping, even if we are in very woeful plight : and when thou seest me on my part disquieted, do thou ⁹ appease and mollify the terror and distraction of my mind ; but when thou groanest, 'tis right for me being by to admonish thee in friendly sort : for these kindnesses are honourable among friends. But, O wretched one, go within the palace, and in recumbent posture give up thy sleepless eyelids to slumber, and take some food, and apply the bath to thy body. For if thou shalt fail me, or by attendance on me shalt catch any disease, we are lost : for thee alone I have an ally, being as thou seest destitute of others.

ELEC. It is not good : with thee I will choose both to die and to live ; for 'tis the same thing : if thou die, what shall I a woman do ? How shall I be preserved alive, brotherless, fatherless, friendless ? But if it seems good to thee, thus I must do : but recline thy body upon the couch, and do not too readily give way to that which terrifies thee and scares thee from thy resting place, but remain upon the well covered bed. For even if thou be

⁸ 296. ἐπαίρειν τινά τι dic-
tum ut πείθειν τινά τι, monet

Matthiæ. Dind.

⁹ 298. ἱσχυαίε. P.

not afflicted but fanciest thou art afflicted,¹ to mortals this becomes both trouble and distress.

CHORUS.

Woe ! woe ! O ye swift-winged deities, ² shrilly screaming, ye to whom hath fallen the lot of a joyless company, amidst wailings and tears, ye dark Eumenides ; and who hurry ³ through the wide expanse of ether, exacting vengeance for blood, chastising murder, I supplicate ye, I supplicate ye, permit the son of Agamemnon to have oblivion of his frantic wandering madness. Woe for those toils, impelled by which thou now art perishing, having received from the tripod the response which Phœbus pronounced, pronounced, on that spot where are the secret recesses which are called the navel of earth. O Jove ! what pitiable woe, what strife of blood is this which approacheth hastening on against thee the wretched one, for whom some avenging fury adds [will add P.] tears to tears, bringing upon thy house the blood of thy mother, which rouses thee to frenzy ? I bewail thee, I bewail thee. Mighty prosperity is not stable among mortals ; but some deity, blowing it hither and thither like the sail of a swift bark, overwhelms it in the greedy death-fraught waves of fearful woes,⁴ as of a sea. For what other house, up to this time, besides that which was born of divine wedlock, the house of Tantalus, must I revere ? But hither indeed comes the king, the royal Menelaus, by his exceeding splendour

¹ 315. *Mibi hæc tam inepta videntur ut non dubitem quin post v. 314 aliquid exciderit.*

Dind.

² 318. *ποτνιαδες*. Perhaps also for *πότνιαι*, awful.

³ 322. *ἀμπάλλει*. P. propter

metrum. Simplex *πάλλω* medio sensu occurrit Electr. 438. Mox. 319. P.

⁴ 343. The above construction is according to Matth. : others govern *πόνων* by *κατέκλυσεν*, inundates it with woes.

clearly discernible⁵ to be of the blood of the sons of Tantalus. O thou who didst rouse up an armament of a thousand ships against the land of Asia, all hail ! But thou art thyself an associate of good fortune, having accomplished, by the help of the gods, all that was thy prayer.

MENELAUS.

O thou palace ! in one sense indeed I look upon thee with pleasure, having returned from Troy, but in another I groan when I behold thee. For no other hearth have I ever yet seen more encircled than thou art by woeful ills. For the fate indeed of Agamemnon and his death, I knew by what a death he fell at the hand of his wife, when I had put in my prow at Malea : for from the waves the seamen's seer, the prophet Glaucus, Nereus' son, announced it to me, a god who cannot lie ; and he spake these words to me, visibly standing by me. " Menelaus, thy brother lies dead ; having met with his last bath at the hands of his wife," but he filled me and my sailors with many tears. But as soon as I touched the land of Nauplia, where my wife was already setting out to come hither, I, expecting to embrace in my dear arms Orestes the son of Agamemnon, and his mother, as prospering, heard from a seabeaten sailor of the unholy murder done on the daughter of Tyndareus. And now, tell me, O damsels, where is the son of Agamemnon who has dared these evil deeds. For he was but a child then, in the arms of Clytæmnestra, when I left the palace, voyaging to Troy ; so that I should not recognise him, were I to look upon him.

ORES. I am Orestes, Menelaus, for whom thou in-

⁵ 349. πολλὸν δ' ἀβρ. P. and discernible etc.
by his splendour, *very* clearly

quirest. Readily will I narrate to thee my woes. But in the first place I embrace thy knees as a suppliant, letting fall prayers from a mouth unaided by the olive branch; save me; and thou thyself hast come at the very moment to preserve me from evil.

MEN. O ye gods, what do I behold? whom of the dead do I look upon?

ORES. Thou hast said aright; for I live not in my wretchedness, but yet behold the light of day.

MEN. How wild hast thou become with thy squalid hair, wretched one.

ORES. 'Tis not my appearance, but my deeds, that torment me.

MEN. And fearfully thou glarest from thine eyes with haggard eyeballs.

ORES. My body is gone: but my name hath not forsaken me.

MEN. Oh how contrary to my expectations is the appearance of thine unseemly form!

ORES. I here, am the murderer of my illfated mother.

MEN. I have heard it; but spare to repeat⁶ evil news.

ORES. I do spare: but the deity is lavish to me of evils.

MEN. What sufferest thou? What disease destroys thee?

ORES. My conscience; for I am conscious of having done fearful deeds.

⁶ 393. Debebat dicere *φείδου μὴ πολλάκις λέγειν κακά*, quæ est legitima hujusmodi verbo-

rum constructio; pro eo synonymum posuit vocabulum *ὀλιγάκις*. Dind.

MEN. How sayest thou? That, in sooth, is wise which is clear, not that which is not clear.

ORES. Grief especially, at least, it is that is destroying me.

MEN. And a fearful deity too, but nevertheless appeasable.

ORES. And fits of madness, avengers of my mother's blood.

MEN. And when didst thou commence thy frenzy? what day was it, then?

ORES. The day on which I honoured my mother by raising a tomb over her.

MEN. Was it at home, or in attendance at the funeral pyre?

ORES. 'Twas while watching by night the taking up of her bones.

MEN. Was any one else present, who supported thy body?

ORES. Pylades, who helped me in shedding the blood and committing the murder of my mother.

MEN. And by what sort of phantoms art thou thus afflicted?

ORES. Methought I saw three damsels like unto night.

MEN. I know those thou speakest of, but I wish not to name them.

ORES. Aye, for they are awful: and wisely thou art averse to naming them.

MEN. Do these inspire thee with frenzy for the shedding of kindred blood?

ORES. Woe is me for their pursuits, with which wretched I am harassed.

MEN. 'Tis not strange that those who have done fearful deeds should suffer fearfully.

ORES. But I have where I may transfer my calamity.

MEN. Say not death ; for that indeed is not wise.

ORES. Phœbus, who commanded me to perpetrate the murder of my mother.

MEN. Yea, being little skilled in right and justice.

ORES. We are the slaves of the gods, whatever those gods be.

MEN. And then does not Loxias defend thee in thy troubles ?

ORES. He delays ; but the Deity is such by disposition.

MEN. And how long is it since thy mother breathed her last ?

ORES. This is the sixth day ; her funeral pile is yet warm.

MEN. How speedily have the goddesses visited thy mother's blood upon thee !

ORES. I am by nature not prudent, but a true friend to my friends.

MEN. And does the vengeance of thy father afford thee any help ?

ORES. Not as yet : and delay I consider the same as ruin.⁷

MEN. And how standest thou as regards the city having done these deeds ?

ORES. We are hated so that no one speaks to us.

MEN. Hast thou not even been purified from the blood on thy hands, according to the laws ?

ORES. Nay ; for I am shut out from all houses wherever I go.

MEN. Which of the citizens vie with each other to expel thee from the land ?

⁷ 426. ἀπραξία : perhaps the same as doing nothing at all.

ORES. Œax, throwing back upon my father his hatred which arose from Troy.

MEN. I understand ; the death of Palamedes avenges itself on thee.

ORES. Aye, a death in which I had no part ; thrice utterly⁸ am I ruined.

MEN. And who besides ? I suppose some of the friends of Ægisthus ?

ORES. These insult me, and the city at present listens to them.

MEN. And does the city permit thee to hold the sceptre of Agamemnon ?

ORES. How should they, who do not even suffer us to live any longer ?

MEN. By doing what that thou canst tell me clearly ?

ORES. A decree will be passed against us this very day.

MEN. To go into banishment from this city, or to die, or not to die ?

ORES. To be stoned to death by our fellow citizens.

MEN. And dost thou not then escape, passing over the boundaries of the land ?

ORES. We are encircled around by all brazen arms.

MEN. Privately, by personal foes, or by an Argive hand ?

ORES. By all the citizens, that I may die : the tale is short.

MEN. O wretched one, thou hast arrived at the extremity of calamity !

ORES. My hope looks to thee for a refuge from woe.

⁸ 434. διὰ τριῶν, i.e. παντε-
λῶς, metaphora a verbo τρι-
αῖσι sumpta.—BRUNCK. τρίαξαι

means to give a competitor
three falls and so to beat him.

And do thou, who hast returned prosperous, impart of thy prosperity to thy friends who are in woeful plight, and do not keep to thyself that which is good, when thou hast received it, but take a share of trouble also, in thy turn, repaying my father's kindnesses to those to whom thou shouldst repay them. For those friends have the name only but not the reality, who are not friends in misfortune.

CHOR. And see, hither speeds the Spartan-born Tyndareus with aged foot, clad in black robes, and with his head shorn in token of mourning for his daughter.

ORES. I am lost, Menelaus; here comes Tyndareus towards us, into whose presence I am, above all, ashamed to come after the deeds I have done. For he both brought me up when little, and gave me many a kiss, bearing about in his arms the son of Agamemnon, and Leda together with him, both honouring me no less than the twin sons of Jove: and to them, O my wretched heart and soul, I have paid back no fair return: what darkness may I find to conceal my face? what cloud may I set before me, flying the sight of the old man's eyes?

TYNDAREUS.

Where where may I see the husband of my daughter, Menelaus? For as I was pouring me out libations over the tomb of Clytæmnestra, I heard that he had arrived at Nauplia with his wife, having been preserved in safety for many years. Lead me to him; for I wish to stand on his right hand and greet him, having beheld my friend after so long a time.

MEN. Hail, aged man, thou whose bed Jove has shared.

TYND. All hail thou also, O Menelaus, my kinsman. Ha! what an evil it is not to know the future!

This matricidal serpent here before the palace flashes forth the lightnings of madness, he, mine abomination. Menelaus, dost thou address him, an impious wretch?

MEN. Why not? He is the son of a father dear to me.

TYND. What, is this man sprung from him, being such as he is?

MEN. He is sprung from him : and if he be unfortunate, he must be respected.

TYND. Thou hast become barbarian, dwelling so long among barbarians.

MEN. 'Tis a Grecian custom, I ween, to respect one of the same race.

TYND. Aye, and not to choose to be superior to the laws.

MEN. All that is of necessity, is as the act of a slave in the eyes of the wise.

TYND. Do thou then hold this opinion, but I will never entertain it.

MEN. Aye, for thy passion and thine old age together are not a wise union.

TYND. With respect to this man, could any question [what question P.] as to wisdom arise? If what is right is evident to all, and what is not right, who among men has been more foolish than this man, who, indeed, regarded not justice, nor did he conform to the common law of the Greeks? For when Agamemnon had breathed forth his life, smitten over the head by my daughter—a most foul deed, for never will I praise it—he ought to have proceeded against his mother, instituting a righteous trial for murder, and to have cast her forth from his house : and so he would have gained the reputation of

prudence, in return for⁹ [from P.] the penalty she would have suffered, and would have observed the law, and have been a pious man. But now he has come into the same fate as his mother: for with justice esteeming her base, he has himself become more base by having committed matricide. But I will ask thee, Menelaus, thus much. If this man's wife, the partner of his bed, should slay him, and his son, again, shall in turn slay his mother, and then he who is born from him shall expiate murder by murder, to what point, prithee, will the limit of mischief advance? Our fathers of old ordained these matters well; for they permitted him not to come into the sight of their eyes, nor into their presence, whoever had the pollution of blood, but commanded to purify him by exile, but not to take blood for blood. For ever there would have been one to entangle himself in bloodshed, taking upon his hands the last pollution. But I detest indeed impious women, and most of all my daughter who slew her husband: Helen also, thine own wife, never will I praise, I would not even speak to her; nor do I admire thee for going, for the sake of a vile woman, to the plains of Troy. But I will defend, as far as I am able, the law, putting a stop to this brutality and bloodthirstiness, ever making havoc of both land and cities. For what state of mind hadst thou then, thou wretch, when thy mother bared her breast, supplicating thee? I indeed who did not see the evil deeds done there melt away mine aged eye with tears, wretched that I am! One thing there is in harmony

⁹ 502. ἀντὶ συμφορᾶς. "Hic est totius loci sensus, potuisse Orestem, si matrem e domo ejiceret, satis habuisset, hoc

consequi ut ille pœnam calamitatis, ipse modestiæ et prudentiæ laudem reportaret." Dind.

with my arguments; thou art hated at least by the gods, and thou sufferest retribution for thy mother's death, wandering in frenzy and terrors. Why need I listen to other witnesses than the things which I can behold? That thou mayest understand then, Menelaus, act not in defiance of the gods, by being willing to aid this man; [but suffer him to be stoned to death by the citizens, or never set foot upon the land of Sparta.] for my daughter indeed in her death suffered justly; but it was not right that she should die by this man's hand. And I in all else am a happy man, save as to my daughters; but in that respect I am not prosperous.

CHOR. Envious is he who hath been fortunate as to his children, and hath not incurred notable calamities.

ORES. Old man, in sooth I fear to speak against thee, when ¹at least I am likely to vex thy soul in any way. And I am unholy, having slain my mother, but in another sense holy, as avenging my father. Now let thine old age be banished out of the way of our discourse, for it awes me from speaking; and I will proceed on my path; but even now I fear thy grey hairs. What ought I to have done? For set twain against twain: my father indeed begot me, but thy daughter brought me forth, a field which received the seed from another; but without a father there could never be a child; I reckoned therefore that I should rather take the part of the first author of my birth, than hers, who undertook my nourishment. And thy daughter, I am ashamed to say my mother, with private marriage rites and unchaste, entered the bed of another: if I speak ill of her, I shall convict myself; but nevertheless I will say it. Ægis-

¹ 545. *σε* for *γτ*, P. to vex thee and thy soul.

thus was her secret husband in her house. Him I slew ; and besides I sacrificed my mother, doing unholy deeds, but avenging my father. But as to what thou threatenest, that I ought to be stoned to death, hear how I am a benefactor to the whole of Greece ; for if women are to arrive at that pitch of audacity, to murder men, making their refuge in their children, hunting for pity by baring their breasts, it would be as nothing for them to destroy their husbands, having any charge against them that might happen. But I, by doing fearful deeds, as thou loudly affirmest, have put a stop to this custom. And with justice hating my mother I slew her, who betrayed her husband when absent in arms from his home, chief of the host in behalf of all Greece, and she kept not her bed undefiled ; and when she felt that she had sinned, not on herself did she impose the penalty, but that she might not suffer the penalty from her husband, she inflicted the punishment on my father, and slew him. In the name of the gods—at an unseemly time indeed have I made mention of the gods, when pleading the cause of blood—if then I had assented in silence to my mother's deeds, what would he who is dead have done to me ? Would not he, in anger, have scared me away with the furies ? Or do the goddesses stand by my mother, indeed, as her allies, but stand not by him who has been more deeply injured ? Thou in sooth, by having begotten a wicked daughter, old man, hast destroyed me ; for through her audacity being deprived of a father, I have become a matricide. See'st thou ? Telemachus slew not the wife of Odysseus ; for she married not one husband upon another, but remained in her house, an unpolluted bedfellow. See'st thou ? Apollo, he who inhabiting the seats of earth's navel

imparts to mortals most unerring words, whom we obey in all whatever things he commands, obeying him I slew my mother. Deem him unholy, and slay him; 'twas he who sinned, not I. What ought I to do? Or is not the god of sufficient consideration for me, by transferring the pollution to him, to expiate? Whither, then, will any one henceforth escape, if, having given the command, he shall not rescue me from death? But say not that these deeds have not been done well, but that they have been done unhappily for us, the doers. For wedlock, to all of mortals among whom it is set on a good foundation, is a happy life; but those to whom it turns out ill are unfortunate both at home and abroad.

CHOR. Women are born ever to stand in the way of the fortunes of men, so as to turn them to misfortune.

TYND. Since thou bravest it out, and wilt not dissemble in thy speech, but answerest me so as to vex my soul, thou wilt the more inflame² me to achieve thy death. And I shall deem this a goodly bywork to the business on which I came, to bedeck my daughter's tomb. For having gone among the select body of the Argives I will set the city with its own good will, not reluctantly, upon thee and thy sister, that ye may suffer the penalty of stoning.³ But she is more worthy⁴ to die than thou, she who inflamed thee against thy mother, ever sending tales into thine ears to excite the more ill will, narrating her mother's dreams concerning Aga-

² 609. ἀνάψεις P. quod revocandum. DIND.—If ἀνάξεις be retained, it must be taken transit., *thou wilt incite*: as the simple ἀίσσω is used infr. 1429. and Soph. Aj. 40.

³ 614. This is Elmsley's interpretation. Porson's is "I

will urge the city on, to inflict upon you the penalty" taking δοῦναι δίκην not for pœnas pendere but jus dare. Scholefield interprets, "I will set the city upon you, for you and your sister to suffer etc.,"

⁴ 615. ἐπαξία. ἐστ' ἀξία. P.

memnon, and that bed she shared with Ægisthus—which may the gods below detest, for even there 'twas bitter—until she had set fire to the house with an illomened blaze. To thee, Menelaus, I say this, and moreover I will perform it: if thou makest of account my enmity and my alliance, defend not this man from death, in opposition to the gods; but suffer him to be stoned to death by the citizens, or never set foot upon the land of Sparta. Having heard thus much, bear it in mind; and do not, by rejecting more pious friends, prefer the impious. But lead me hence from this palace, my attendants.

ORES. Get thee gone, that so my succeeding words may reach this man without interruption, having escaped thy old age. Menelaus, to what purpose dost thou pace round and round, in anxious thought, going the twofold path of double care.

MEN. Let me be; I am reflecting somewhat with myself, and I am at a loss which way, under the circumstances, I shall betake myself.

ORES. Do not then bring your opinions to a conclusion, but having first heard my arguments, then deliberate.

MEN. Speak on; for thou hast said well: there are cases where silence would be better than words, and others where words are better than silence.

ORES. I will speak at once. That which is at length is better than short speeches, and more intelligible to hear. Do thou, Menelaus, give not to me anything of thine, but repay me what thou hast received, having received it from my father. I meant not wealth; 'tis wealth, if thou save my life, which is the dearest to me of my possessions. Grant I am guilty of injustice;⁵ in

⁵ 646. ἀδίκῳ; P. Am I guilty of injustice?

return for this evil I ought to gain at thy hand some act of injustice; for Agamemnon my father also, having contrary to justice gathered Greece together went against Ilium, not having sinned himself, but striving to heal the sin and the injustice of thy wife. This then is one benefit which thou shouldest give me in return for one. And he gave up to thee in all sincerity his body (as friends should to friends), toiling under the shield, that thou mightest regain thy yokefellow. Pay back to me then this same thing which thou didst then receive, by labouring in our behalf, standing up in our defence, for a single day, not fulfilling ten years. And the blood of my slaughtered sister, which Aulis received, I allow thee to keep that; slay not thou Hermione. For when I am faring as now I fare, 'tis right that thou shouldest have the better of me, and I should pardon it. But give thou to my unhappy sire my life and my sister's, a virgin of many years; for if I die I shall leave the house of my father childless. Thou wilt say,⁶ it is impossible: that is the very thing; 'tis in misfortunes that friends ought to aid their friends: but when the deity gives prosperity, what need of friends? for 'tis sufficient that the god himself is willing to assist us. Thou art thought by all the Greeks to love thy wife: (and this I say not insinuating myself into thy favour by flattery) by her I supplicate thee. O wretch that I am, by reason of my woes, to what a pitch have I arrived! But why need I undergo trouble? For I offer these supplications in behalf of our whole house. O godlike brother of my sire, deem that he who is dead beneath the earth hears these words, hovering in spirit over thee, and that he

⁶ 665. ἀδύνατον; P. wilt thou say etc.?

says what I say. This have I said, as to tears and wailings and calamities ; and I have demanded of thee the preservation of my life, seeking for what not I only but all men desire.

CHOR. And I also, although a woman, yet nevertheless I supplicate thee to give succour to those who seek it of thee ; and thou art able to do so.

MEN. Orestes, in sooth I respect thy person, and I am desirous to take part in thy troubles ; for it is one's duty also to join thus in bearing the evils of one's kinsmen, if the god grant the power, by dying oneself and by slaying their enemies. But, again, to have the power, I wish, by the aid of the gods, to obtain it ; for I have arrived hitherto with my spear destitute of allies, wandering in innumerable toils, with but a scanty power of the friends who are left to me. In battle then we could not overcome Pelasgian Argos ; but if by soft words we could do so, then we come near some hope. For with scanty means of labour, how could any one get the mastery of what is mighty ?⁷ 'tis foolish even to desire this. For when the commons are in the full prime of vigour, if they become enraged, 'tis like unto devouring fire, to extinguish ; but if any one, quietly yielding to the storm, voluntarily gives way to it as it sweeps on, watching his opportunity, perchance it may expend its violence ; and when it has remitted its gusts, thou mightest obtain from it easily all that thou desirest. And there is in it pity, and there is vehement ire, a possession of greatest value to him who watches events. But I will go and attempt, for thee, to persuade Tyn-dareus and the city, by treating them exceeding well.

⁷ 695. om. P.

For a ship, too, whose sail is kept tight by the sheet, dips in the waves, but rights again, if any one slackens the cable. For the god hates acts of excessive zeal, and the citizens hate them; and I must, I do not deny it, save thee by policy, not in the teeth of those who are stronger than I. But by force of arms, as thou perhaps fanciest, I could not preserve thy life; for 'tis not easy with a single spear to erect a trophy over the evils which surround thee. For never yet have we been wont to reduce the land of Argos by force⁸ to gentleness: now therefore 'tis necessary for the wise to be the slaves of fortune.⁹

ORES. O thou, in all else good for nothing, save to lead an army for a woman's sake! O thou most base in succouring thy friends! fliest thou me having turned thy back upon me? but the remembrance of Agamemnon is vanished. Thou wast friendless, then, my father, when in adversity. Woe is me, I have been betrayed; and I have no longer any hopes, betaking myself to which I may escape death at the hands of the Argives. For this man was my harbour of safety. But stay! for I see here the dearest of mortals, Pylades, from the Phocians advancing with hurried speed,—delightful sight; for a faithful friend in adversity is better to look upon than a calm for seamen.

PYLADES.

I have come through the city speeding more hastily than I ought, having heard of an assembly of the citizens,

⁸ Nunquam enim Argivam terram, sc. Argivos, ad molli-
tiem redigere solebamus, i. e.
vi subigere: tu igitur etc.—

SCHOLEF.

Ibid. "Malim προσηγό-

μεσθ' ἄν· nunquam Argivis
adhiberem blanditias, nisi ne-
cessitas, cui sapientes cedunt,
me cogeret." Schæfer.

⁹ 716. Post hunc versum e
scenâ abit Menelaus. DIND.

and seeing it myself distinctly, convened against thee and thy sister, to put you to death straightway. What means this? How art thou? How farest thou, best beloved of mine equals in age, and of my friends? for all these things art thou to me.

ORES. We are lost, to tell thee our misfortunes briefly.

PYL. If so, thou wouldst ruin me with thee; for the things of friends are in common.

ORES. Menelaus is most base towards me and my sister.

PYL. 'Tis probable that the husband of a base woman should become base.

ORES. Having arrived hither, he hath shown me the same kindness as if he had never come.

PYL. Has he then indeed arrived in this land?

ORES. After a long time; but nevertheless most quickly hath he been discovered to be a base friend.

PYL. And hath he come bringing in his ship his wife, the vilest of women?

ORES. 'Tis not he who hath brought her hither, but she him.

PYL. Where is she who, for one woman, destroyed so many of the Achæans?

ORES. In my house, if indeed I may call this mine own.

PYL. But thou, what words didst thou speak to thy father's brother?

ORES. That he should not see me and my sister slain by the citizens.

PYL. In the name of the gods, what said he to this? for that I wish to know.

ORES. He was cautious, as base friends act towards their friends.

PYL. Proceeding to what pretext? For having learned this, I know all.

ORES. *He* came, the father who begat those most virtuous daughters.

PYL. Thou meanest Tyndareus. Incensed with thee, perchance, on account of his daughter.

ORES. Thou perceivest right. This man's alliance he preferred to my father's.

PYL. And being present, did he not dare to take a part in thy troubles?

ORES. No; for he was not born to be a warrior, but brave only among women.

PYL. Thou art then in the greatest evil, and 'tis fated for thee to die.

ORES. 'Tis determined that the citizens pass a vote concerning us, on the charge of murder.

PYL. Which shall determine what? for I begin to be afraid.

ORES. Either that we shall die, or live: the tale is not long though it be about lengthy matters.

PYL. Fly then, and leave the palace, together with thy sister.

ORES. Seest thou not? We are watched by guards in every quarter.

PYL. I saw the streets of the city hedged in with arms.

ORES. Our persons are beleaguered like a city by enemies.

PYL. ¹ Ask me too, then, how I fare; for I also am ruined.

ORES. By whom? This would be an additional woe to my present ones.

¹ 763. *vũv*, P. *now*.

PYL. My father Strophius has driven me forth from home an exile, being incensed with me.

ORES. Bringing a private accusation or one in common with the citizens?

PYL. Because I joined in committing the murder of thy mother; alleging that it was impious.

ORES. O wretched one, it seems that thou also wilt suffer the pain of my woes.

PYL. I am not of the disposition of Menelaus. I must bear this.

ORES. Fearest thou not lest Argos should desire to slay thee, as me also?

PYL. I belong not to them to punish, but to the land of the Phocians.

ORES. A fearful thing are the many, when they have villanous leaders.

PYL. But when they have obtained good ones, they always counsel well.

ORES. Well — We must confer together.

PYL. Concerning what important matter?

ORES. If I were to go, and tell the citizens——

PYL. That thou hast acted justly?

ORES. In avenging my own father?

PYL. I fear that they will be glad to get hold² of thee.

ORES. But shall I die crouching down in silence?

PYL. That were cowardly.

ORES. How then might I act?

PYL. Hast thou any means of safety if thou remainest here?

ORES. I have none.

² 776. *μη οὐ λάβωσι*. P. They will never receive thee graciously.

PYL. And is there any hope that by going thou mayest be preserved from evil?

ORES. If it so happened, there might be.

PYL. This therefore is better than to remain here.

ORES. But shall I go then?

PYL. However, if thou diest, thou wilt so die more honourably.

ORES. And what I have done is at least just.

PYL. Only pray that it may seem so.

ORES. Thou sayest well. In this way I escape the imputation of cowardice.

PYL. More so than by remaining here.

ORES. And at least some might feel compassion for me.

PYL. Aye, for thy noble birth is a great thing.

ORES. Troubled about the murder of my father.

PYL. All this is ³ before our eyes.

ORES. I will go, for 'tis unmanly to die ingloriously.

PYL. This I approve of.

ORES. Shall we tell it to my sister?

PYL. Do not, by heaven!

ORES. There would be weeping, in sooth.

PYL. This, then, is a mighty omen.

ORES. Evidently 'tis best to be silent.

PYL. And thou wilt gain by the time.

ORES. That thing alone opposes me.

PYL. What new thing, again, is this thou tellest of?

ORES. Lest the goddesses possess me with frenzy.

PYL. But I will take care of thee.

ORES. 'Tis dangerous to touch an insane man.

PYL. Not for me at least, to touch thee.

³ ἐν ὄμμασι, cf. Soph. Trach. 240, etc.—But otherwise: all these things depend upon the eyes.

ORES. Take care that thou share not my madness.

PYL. Let this pass, then.

ORES. Thou wilt not hesitate, then?

PYL. No; for hesitation among friends is a great evil.

ORES. Proceed then, thou rudder of my foot.

PYL. Aye, and having a dear charge.

ORES. And conduct me to the tomb of my father.

PYL. For what purpose, this?

ORES. That I may supplicate him to save me.

PYL. Aye, thus it is just for him to act.

ORES. But may I not even behold the sepulchre of my mother?

PYL. No, for she was an enemy. But press on, that the decree of the Argives may not overtake thee first; resting thy sides, that are heavy with sickness, upon my sides; for I will carry thee through the city, little recking of the multitude, and in no wise ashamed. For how shall I show myself to be a friend, if I shall not succour thee, who art involved in fearful calamities?

ORES. This is that proverb, "Get ye friends, not kindred only." For a man who has become identified with thy disposition, though a stranger by blood, is better to have as a friend than ten thousand brothers.

CHORUS.

The great prosperity of the sons of Atreus, and their valour, that was so proud throughout Hellas, and on the banks of Simois, hath long since been ebbing back from good fortune, after the ancient calamity of their house: whenever it was that strife for the golden fleeced lamb came upon the sons of Tantalus; most woeful feastings, and slaughterings of noble children; whence murder succeeding murder, with bloodshed, fails not to

come upon the two sons of Atreus. That which was deemed honourable was not honourable, to mangle with fireborn instrument the flesh of the children, and to exhibit the sword black with gore before the beams of the sun. But again to do villany is frantic [great P.] impiety, and the madness of evil-minded men. And in fear of death the wretched daughter of Tyndareus cried aloud; "O my child, thou darest no holy deed in slaying thy mother; do not, by respecting thy duty to thy sire, attach to thyself ignominy for ever." What pestilence, or what tears, or what sight of pity is there over the earth greater than the taking on one's hands the blood of a mother's murder? Even so he, at least, having accomplished the deed, the son of Agamemnon, is possessed with frantic madness, a prey for slaughter to the Eumenides, reeling wildly, with rolling eyes. O wretched one, when having looked upon his mother's breast, rising out of her gold inwoven raiment, he slaughtered his mother, a requital for the sufferings of his sire.

ELECTRA.

O women, has the wretched Orestes, as I suppose, rushed forth from this palace, overcome by madness sent by heaven?

CHOR. By no means; but he has gone to the assembly of the people of Argos, to undergo the appointed trial of his life, according to which ye are to live or die.

ELEC. Woe is me! What has he done? And who persuaded him?

CHOR. Pylades. But this messenger here, at no great distance, seems likely to bring thee the news thence concerning thy brother.

MESSENGER.

O wretched one, O illfated child of Agamemnon, leader of the host, my lady, Electra, hear the unhappy tidings bearing which to thee I have come.

ELEC. Woe, woe! We are lost. Thou showest it by thy speech; for thou hast come, as it seems, a messenger of ill.

MESS. It has been determined by a decree of the Pelasgians, that thy brother and thyself, O wretched one, die on this very day.

ELEC. Woe is me! the expectation is verified, in which, fearing what was to come, I have long since been pining away in wailings. But what was the trial, what speeches among the Argives destroyed us, and confirmed our death? Speak out, old man, whether is it by the hand armed with stones or with the sword that I must break off the breath of life, having met with the same calamitous fate as my brother.

MESS. I chanced, indeed, to be entering the city gates from the country, wanting to inquire the news about thee and about Orestes; for I ever entertained good will towards thy father, and thy house too used to support me, a poor man indeed, but to have dealings with, generous towards my friends. And I see a multitude advancing and seating themselves on the hill where they say Danaus first convened the people to sit in public assembly, when submitting his suit with Ægyptus to trial. And then in sooth, having seen the gathering, I asked one of the citizens, what news in Argos? It cannot be that any message from some enemy hath aroused the city of the sons of Danaus? And he answered, See'st thou not Orestes there advancing towards us, who is about to undergo a trial for his life? And

then I behold an unlooked for sight, which Oh that I had never seen. Both Pylades and thy brother, advancing together, the latter indeed downcast and languid with sickness, but the other like a brother, enduring equal pain with his friend, tending his sickness with careful service. But when the assembly of the Argives was full, a herald rose up and proclaimed, "Who wishes to give his opinion whether Orestes, being a matricide, should be put to death or no?"—And after him there rises up Talthybius, who aided thy sire in overthrowing the Phrygians; and he being ever the slave of those who are in power, spake ambiguously; thy father, indeed, landing exceedingly, but not praising thy brother; under a fair show, wilily uttering evil sentiments, "How that he had established no good precedent towards parents;" but ever he was showing a fawning face to the friends of Ægisthus. For such is the sort of them; heralds ever rush to the side of the fortunate man; and he is their friend, who has power in the city and is in office. And after him king Diomedes harangued them. He indeed was not for letting them slay either thee or thy brother, but that they should consult the interests of religion by punishing you with banishment. And some indeed applauded him, that he had spoken well, but others did not assent to him. And after these there rises up a certain man, an unceasing babbler, strong in impudence, an Argive who was not an Argive, but forced upon the citizenship, confident in clamour and untaught license of tongue, persuasive enough, moreover, to involve them [the citizens P.] in some evil action. For when a man sweet of speech, but with evil designs, can persuade the multitude, 'tis a great curse to the city: but all who, with good sense, give ever good counsel, these, if not

immediately, at some future time are useful to the state. And by these rules, looking upon a leader of the people, ought one to regard him : for it comes to the same thing for a man to be a public speaker and to hold an honourable office. This man then gave his opinion that they should put to death Orestes and thyself by stoning : and Tyndareus suggested such arguments for him to utter, who was for slaying you both. And another having risen up spoke in opposition to this one, in form indeed not comely, but a manly citizen, seldom polluting by his presence the city or the round Agora, a husbandman, one of those who alone preserve the land, but of understanding sufficient to contend in argument with others, when he chooses ; a guileless man, who has led a life without reproach. And he proposed to give a crown to Orestes the son of Agamemnon, who had been ready to avenge his father by slaying a wicked and godless woman, who was depriving us of this, so that no one would take arms in his hand nor go out to war, leaving his home, if those who remain behind seduce the women who stay at home, polluting men's wives. And to the honest citizens, at least, he seemed to speak wisely, and no one spake any more ; but thy brother came forward and said ; “ O ye who possess the land of Inachus,⁴ [of old Pelasgi, but afterwards sons of Danaus] in your cause no less than in my fathers, I slew my mother. For if the murder of men is to be lawful among women, the sooner you die the better, or ye must be slaves to women. But ye will do the opposite of what ye ought to do ; for as it is, she who betrayed my father's bed has been slain ; but if, in sooth, ye shall slay me, the law is

⁴ 933. om. P.

repealed, and the sooner one dies the better, since of daring at least there will be no lack. But he did not persuade the assembly, though seeming to speak well; but that vile man, in speaking before the multitude, prevails, he who was haranguing them to slay thy brother and thee. But the wretched Orestes with difficulty prevailed on them that he [ye P.] might not die by stoning; but he promised on this very day to quit life with thee, in death inflicted by his own hand. And Pylades, in tears, conveys him away from the select assembly; and his friends accompany him, weeping, pitying him; and he approaches, a bitter spectacle and a woeful sight for thee. But make thou ready a knife or a halter for thy neck, for thou must quit this light of day; and thy noble birth hath profited thee nothing, nor even the Pythian Phœbus sitting on his tripod, but he hath destroyed thee.

CHOR. O ill-fated virgin, how voiceless thou art, having cast to earth thy countenance enveloped in the veil, as if thou wert about to break forth into lamentations and wailings.

ELEC. I commence a wailing, O Pelasgian land, fixing my white nail in my cheeks, a misery drawing forth blood, and inflicting blows upon my head, a head which the beauteous damsel, the goddess of the dead below, hath received as her portion. And let the land of the Cyclops howl aloud for the woes of this house, applying the knife to her head, shorn in token of mourning. Here there comes pity, pity for the dead, those who were once chieftains of the armies of Greece. For the whole race of the children of Pelops has gone, has gone, is departed, and the enviable lot which once rested upon their happy homes. 'Twas the envy of the gods that overthrew

them, and the malicious bloody decree passed in the city. Woe, woe ! ye tribes of mortals of a day, all tearful, full of labour, see to what unexpected results destiny proceeds. And men exchange, one taking one woe, and another another, in the lengthof time ; but the whole life of mortals is uncertain. Would that I could make my way to the rock that is hung hovering between earth and heaven, ⁵ the mass depending from Olympus by chains of gold, borne about by whirlwinds, where, with lamentations I would cry aloud to Tantalus, my aged ancestor, who begot, who begot the fathers of my house ; those who witnessed deeds of woe, who witnessed indeed the winged flight of coursers in the four-horsed chariot : what time Pelops raced with ocean for the death of Myrtilus, by casting him into the billows of the sea, having urged his chariot near the Geræstian shores white with waves, shores of the ocean surge. Whence upon my house there came a curse, cause of many a groan, what time was born the deadly deadly prodigy, the golden-fleeced lamb, conceived by the art of the son of Maia among the flocks of Atreus, ⁶ breeder of horses ; from which both contention changed the course of the winged chariot of the sun, adapting his path to the westward of heaven, to the direction of morning of the single steed, and Jove alters the course of the Pleiad with its seven tracks, and gives deaths in exchange for their deaths, and brings on Thyestean feasts, named after Thyestes, and the bed of Cretan Aërope, crafty in treacherous adultery. And at last upon me and my brother it hath come, with the woeful fate of our house.

⁵ 982. seq.—Electra means
the Sun. cf. Porson.

⁶ 1000. *ἰπποβότα*. P.

CHOR. And see, here comes thy brother who has been condemned to death, and Pylades also the most faithful of all men, ⁷ guiding his limbs weak with sickness, with careful foot his yokefellow.

ELEC. Woe is me! For beholding thee before the tomb, and before the funeral pile of the dead below, I groan aloud, O my brother! Woe is me verily and again! Of a truth taking this last look of thee face to face, I have gone out of my mind.

ORESTES.

Wilt thou not, in silence, forsaking thy womanish wailings, be content with what has been decreed? These things are pitiable, but nevertheless we must of necessity bear the fortune that befalls us.

ELEC. And how can I be silent? For we wretched have no longer any share in looking upon this effulgence of the god of light.

ORES. Do not *thou* kill me; I wretched have been slain sufficiently by the hand of Argos: but let our present woes alone.

ELEC. O thou, wretched for thy prime of youth, Orestes, and for thy fate and untimely death! thou shouldest have been living, when thou no longer existest.

ORES. Do not, in the name of the gods, bring upon me the imputation of unmanliness, by prolonging thy tale of woe till it call forth tears.

ELEC. We are to die. It is not possible not to groan over our woes: for to all mortals the loss of their dear life is lamentable.

⁷ 1015-6. ἰθύρων. ὀρθῶν, and post κῶλον,—Ὀρέστων. P.—*supporting* etc. the limbs of

Orestes.' Elmsl. proposes ἐξί-θύρων.

ORES. This day it is appointed for us to die; and we must either fix suspended nooses, or take a sharpened sword in our hands.

ELEC. Do thou then, my brother, let not any of the Argives kill me, making a mock of the race of Agamemnon.

ORES. The blood of my mother is enough; ⁸ and I will not kill thee. But die in whatever way thou wilt, inflicted by thine own hand.

ELEC. Thus it shall be: I will in no wise fail of thy sword. But I wish to throw my arms around thy neck.

ORES. Enjoy an empty gratification, if this be enjoyment, to embrace those who have approached near unto death.

ELEC. O thou best beloved, that hast the same name with thy sister, long desired and most dear, and that hast one life with her.

ORES. In sooth thou wilt melt me to tears; and I long to answer thee in a loving embrace. For why do I wretched any longer feel shame? O thou breast of my sister, O dear object of my embrace, these words are all we wretched have in place of children and the nuptial bed.

ELEC. Alas! O that the same sword, if it be lawful, might slay us twain, and one sepulchre receive us, the workmanship of the cedar tree! ⁹ That would be most sweet. But seest thou, in sooth, how we are in lack of

⁸ 1039. αἷμα' ἔχω· σὲ δ' οὐκ κτενῶ. P. 'I have enough blood on my hands, the blood of my mother; and *thee* I will not slay.'—

⁹ 1054-5 Oresti tribuit.

P. post v. 1056 pleni distinguat P.

1056-7. Electræ tribuit P. post v. 1057. interrogativè distinguat P.

1058—seq. Oresti trib. P.

friends, so as to share one tomb? The vile Menelaus, the betrayer of my sire, spake not in thy behalf, zealous that thou shouldest not die, he did not even show his face, but having his hopes fixed upon the sceptre, he was too wary to save his friends. But come, let us die, having acted nobly, and most worthily of Agamemnon. And I indeed will demonstrate to the city my noble birth, by striking myself to the heart with a sword: and 'tis thy part, again, to act up to my deeds of hardihood. But do thou, Pylades, be the umpire of our deaths, and carefully lay out the bodies of us twain when dead, and bury us together, bearing us to the tomb of our father. And farewell: for I am going, as thou seest, to do the fatal deed.

PYLADES.

Hold! In the first place I have one complaint against thee, if thou didst expect that I should wish to live, when thou wast dead.

ORES. Why, how does it belong to thee to die with me?

PYL. Didst thou ask? why, how to live, without thy company?

ORES. Thou didst not slay thy mother, as I wretched have done.

PYL. ¹ Yea, but in common with thee I slew her; and I ought to suffer the same fate.

ORES. Restore thyself to thy sire, die not with me. For thou indeed hast a country, but I have none now, and thou hast a father's home and a mighty harbour of wealth. But thou hast failed of thy marriage with this

¹ 1074. σὺν σοί γε κοινῇ I slew her: and I ought to suffer *these things* with thee.
raŭta. P. 'Yea, but with thee

illfated one here, whom I betrothed to thee, reverencing the ties of friendship. But do thou take another wife and beget thee children, but the alliance between me and thee exists no longer. But O thou my much loved comrade, fare thee well : for that is no longer our lot, but nevertheless it is thine. For we, the dead, are bereft of faring well.

PYL. Verily thou hast fallen far short of my intentions. May neither the fruitful plain receive my blood, nor the clear ether, if ever I forsake thee, betraying thee by freeing myself. For I both joined in the slaying, I will not deny it, and I devised all the plans for which thou art now paying the penalty ; and therefore I am bound to die together with thee and with this damsel here. For I consider her mine own wife, inasmuch as I agreed to marry her ; for what honourable sentiment shall I ever utter when I have arrived at the land of Delphi, the citadel of the Phocians, I who, before you were unfortunate, stood by you as a friend, but now am no longer thy friend when in misfortune ? It cannot be so, but these matters are my business also. But since we are to die, let us take counsel together how Menelaus also may partake of our misfortune.

ORES. O best beloved, would that I might see that before I die !

PYL. Take my advice then and delay the stroke of the sword.

ORES. I will delay, if I shall inflict any vengeance on mine enemy.

PYL. Hush, then ; for I put little confidence in women.

ORES. Have no fear of these ; for they stand by us as friends.

PYL. Let us slay Helen, which will be a bitter grief to Menelaus.

ORES. How? For there is readiness enough, if at least it is to be done honourably.

PYL. By cutting her throat. And she is concealed within thy house.

ORES. Assuredly; and in sooth she is setting a seal upon every thing.

PYL. But no longer shall she, when she has received Hades for a bridegroom.

ORES. And how shall we do it? For she has barbarian attendants.

PYL. Whom? for I would fear none of the Phrygians.

ORES. Such as preside over mirrors and perfumes.

PYL. What—hath she come hither with Trojan luxuries?

ORES. So that Hellas is but a scanty dwelling for her.

PYL. The servile race is nothing in comparison with the free.

ORES. And verily having done this deed I ² shrink not from a double death.

PYL. Nor yet in sooth do I, at least avenging thee.

ORES. Make the matter clear, and conclude thy plan, as thou art telling it.

PYL. Let us enter the palace, as if, forsooth, about to suffer death.

ORES. So much I understand, but what remains I perceive not.

² 1116. *ὃν χάζομαι*. Elmsl. *άζομαι*, I fear not.
ad Heracl. 600, proposes *ὃνχ*

PYL. We will bewail to her the fate we are suffering.

ORES. Aye, so that she will shed tears, being overjoyed at heart.

PYL. We two also will experience that, just as she will then.

ORES. Then how shall we accomplish the struggle?

PYL. We will have swords hidden under these robes.

ORES. But how shall we slaughter the attendants first?

PYL. We will shut them out of the palace, one at one place and another at another.

ORES. Aye, and him who is not silent we must slay.

PYL. Then the deed itself points out how we must proceed.

ORES. To murder Helen. I understand the hint.

PYL. Thou hast perceived it; but hear how I will advise. For if indeed we should have let loose our swords upon a more virtuous woman, the murder would have been infamous: but as it is, she will suffer punishment in behalf of universal Hellas, of those whose sires she slew, and whose children she destroyed and whose brides she bereft of their yokefellows. There will be a cry of joy, and they will kindle fire to the gods, invoking many blessings on thee and me to receive, because we shed the blood of a vile woman. And thou wilt no longer be called the matricide, when thou hast slain her, but forsaking that name thou wilt change for the better, being termed the slayer of Helen the slayer of many. Never ought, never ought Menelaus to be prospering, but thy father and thyself and thy sister to be dead, and thy mother

also—that I pass by, for 'tis not seemly to speak of—and he to possess thy home, having gained his wife by the spear of Agamemnon. For may I live no longer, if I draw not forth the dark sword against her. But then, if we accomplish not the death of Helen, having fired this palace we shall die. For by succeeding in one of these things we win glory, either in dying nobly, or in being nobly preserved.

CHOR. The daughter of Tyndareus is worthy for all women to detest her, she who has disgraced her sex.

ORES. Alas! There is nothing better than a true friend, not wealth, not dominion; and the multitude is a thing not be counted in exchange for a noble friend. For thou didst both devise the evils which fell upon Ægisthus, and didst stand by my side in the midst of perils, and now again thou givest me revenge upon mine enemies, and desertest me not. I will cease praising thee, for there is something disagreeable even in this, to be excessively praised. But I by all means, while I breathe forth mine own life, wish to die having done some deed upon my foes, that ³ we may destroy in return those who have betrayed me, and those same may groan who have rendered me wretched. I in sooth was born the son of Agamemnon, who ruled over Greece; being deemed worthy to rule, not as a tyrant; but nevertheless he had strength like as of a god. And him I will not disgrace by dying the death of a slave, but like a free man I will surrender life, and will avenge me on Menelaus. For if we might obtain any thing, we should be fortunate; if from some quarter an unexpected means of safety should befall, when we have inflicted death, not having died our-

³ 1165. ἀνταναλώσω μὲν. P. That I indeed may etc.

selves : for these things I pray. For ⁴ it is sweet even through the mouth by winged words, without cost to gratify the imagination with that which I desire.

ELEC. I, my brother, think that I possess this very thing, the means of safety for thee and this man and in the third place, for myself.

ORES. 'Tis a divine providence thou speakest of. But where is this? for I know that good sense at least resides in thy mind.

ELEC. Well then, listen ; and do thou incline thy attention hither.

ORES. Speak on ; for to be likely to meet with good fortune confers some pleasure.⁵

ELEC. Knowest thou the daughter of Helen? I have asked thee, who knowest her.

ORES. I do know her, Hermione whom my mother reared.

ELEC. She has gone to the tomb of Clytæmnestra.

ORES. To do what? what hope dost thou suggest?

ELEC. To pour out libations over our mother's tomb.

ORES. Well, and pray how does this that thou hast said tend to our preservation?

ELEC. Seize her as a hostage, when she returns again.

ORES. A remedy against what, for us three friends is this thou hast said?

ELEC. When Helen is dead, if Menelaus attempt to do any thing to thee, or to this man and myself, inas-much as this trio of friends are all one, say that thou wilt slay Hermione : and having drawn thy sword thou

⁴ 1176. Constructio est ἡδὺ γάρ ἐστι καὶ διὰ στ. πτ. μ. ἀδ. τέρψαι φρένα ἐκείνην ὃ βού-
λομαι : quod sensu eodem redit

ac si dixisset, ὃ βούλομαι γάρ. τοῦτο καὶ διὰ στόμα ἔχειν ἡδὺ ἐστιν. Matth.

⁵ 1182. μέλλειν sc. πράσσειν.
DIND.

must hold it to the very throat of the virgin. And if indeed Menelaus preserves thy life, not wishing his daughter to die, when he has seen the corpse of Helen weltering in her gore, then let go the virgin for her father to hold. But if, not mastering his furious pride, he strive to slay thee, do thou also cut the throat of the virgin. And I conceive that he, if he be at first very violent, in time will appease the wrath of his heart: for by nature he is neither daring nor warlike. This bulwark of safety I have for us: my speech is said.

ORES. O thou that hast the understanding of a man, but a form eminently beautiful among women, how much more worthy art thou to live than to die! Pylades, surely thou wilt not miss of such a wife as this, O unhappy one,⁶ the blessing of whose bed thou wilt obtain, living?

PYL. Oh that it might be so, and she might come to the city of the Phocians, honoured with noble nuptials!

ORES. And in what time will Hermione return to the palace? For in all else, at least, thou hast spoken admirably, if, as I deem, we shall be fortunate, having caught the whelp of an impious sire.

ELEC. In sooth, I think she must be now near the palace; for the length of the time itself agrees.

ORES. 'Tis well. Do thou then, my sister Electra, remaining before the house, await the approach of the virgin. And be on the watch, in case any one, either some friend, or our father's brother, succeed in entering the palace before the murder has been accomplished; and proclaim it within the house, either by beating against the door or sending words within. But let us,

⁶ 1208. ἤς. ἦ P. "or living wilt thou gain the blessing of her bed?"

Pylades, going within arm our hands with the sword for the fatal conflict ; for thou in sooth art the partaker of my toils. O my father, thou who inhabitest the halls of murky night, Orestes thy son invokes thee to come to the succour of us who are in need. Because for thy sake I wretched unjustly suffer : and I have been betrayed by thy brother, having done just deeds : and his wife I wish to take and slay : but do thou become our accomplice in this.

ELEC. O my father, come then, if thou beneath the earth hearest thy children calling on thee, who are dying in thy cause !

PYL. O Agamemnon,⁷ kinsman of my father, hear my prayers also, save thy children !

ORES. I slew my mother.

PYL. But I laid hold on the sword.

ELEC. And I at least urged ye on, and freed ye from fear.

ORES. Succouring thee, my father—

ELEC. But neither did I betray thee—

PYL. ⁸Wherefore, hearing these reproaches, rescue these thy children.

ORES. I pour over thee a libation of tears.

ELEC. And I, at least, of lamentations.

PYL. Cease, and let us proceed to action. For if, as I deem, prayers pierce within the Earth, he hears. But thou, Jove my progenitor, and thou awful justice, grant to this man and to me and this damsel here to be for-

⁷ 1242. συγγένεια. Pylades' mother was Anaxibia, sister to Agamemnon. Pausan. ii. 29. 4.

BRUNCK.

⁸ 1238. οὐκ οὐν — ῥύσσει τέκνα ; P. Wilt thou not then &c. ?

tunate ; for we three friends have one trial, one cause ; we are bound either all to live or all to die.

ELEC. O ye loved of Mycenæ, the chief in dignity in the Pelasgian seat of the Argives—

CHOR. What speech dost thou utter, my lady? for this distinction yet remains to thee in the city of the sons of Danaus.

ELEC. Stand some of ye on this chariot road ; but the others on another path, to guard the palace.

CHOR. But why dost thou charge me with this office ? Tell me, my friend.

ELEC. A fear possesses me lest some one standing near the palace should moreover discover the murderous bloodshedding, woes upon woes.

SEMICH. A. Haste ye ; let us press on ; I then will guard this path, the one towards the sun's rays.

SEMICH. B. And see, I will guard this which leads to the west.

ELEC. Turn, then, the pupils of your eyes sideway, now in one direction, now in another, then again the contrary way.⁹

SEMICH. We are as thou tellest us.

ELEC. Turn your eyes around, then, casting ¹ your glances in every direction through your ringlets.

SEMICH. B. Who is this ² that appears on the road ? What rustic man is this who wanders near thy home ?

ELEC. We are lost then my friends ; he will

⁹ 1262. εἶτα παλινσκοπίαν. εἶτ' ἐπ' ἄλλην σκοπίαν. P. then in another direction—

¹ 1266-7. ἐλίσσετε νῦν βλέφαρα κόραισι, δίδοτε διὰ βοσ-

τρήχων πάντη. P.—i. e. " Now turn your eyes about with revolving eyeballs, glance through your ringlets etc.—

² 1269. τρίβῃ φαντάζεται. P.

straightway betray to our foes the fierce hidden swordsmen.

SEMICH. B. Fear not ; the path is empty, O beloved one, which thou thinkest is not so.

ELEC. What ? but thy part, I pray, does that still remain secure ? give me some good news, as to whether these parts before the court are undisturbed ?

SEMICH. A. All here at least is well ; but look to thine own side ; for no one of the race of Danaus is drawing near to us.

SEMICH. B. Thou hast come to the same point as myself : for neither here is there any crowd.

ELEC. Come now, let me listen at the gates. Why do ye delay, ye within the house, in quiet, to shed the red blood of the victim ? They do not hear : O wretched me for my woes ! Surely their swords cannot have been dulled at her beauty ? Perchance some Argive in full panoply rushing forth will reach the palace with succouring foot. Take better counsel then ; this is no time to sit still.—But do ye wheel round, some in one direction, and the others in another.

CHOR. Looking in every direction I exchange my path.

HELEN. (*within*) Ho ! Pelasgian Argos ! I am perishing vilely.

ELEC. Heard ye ? the men have their hands engaged in bloodshed : that is the wail of Helen, to conjecture.

CHOR. O eternal might of Jove, of Jove, come thou to the succour of my friends by all means.

HEL. Menelaus, I am perishing, and thou, though near, aidest me not.

ELEC. Slaughter her, kill her, strike her, destroy her, thrusting from your hands two fold two-edged swords ;

her, the forsaken of her sire, the forsaken of her husband, who slew so many of the Greeks; those who were slain with the spear on the banks of that river where tears mingled with tears, who were slain with javelins of iron near the whirlpools of Scamander.

CHOR. Be silent, be silent. I heard a sound as of one entering upon the road near the palace.

ELEC. O women most beloved, here appears Hermione in the midst of the murder. Let us stop our cry. For she advances, having fallen into the nooses of a net. The prize will be a rich one, if it be caught. Take your stations again with composed countenances, and with colour that gives no hint of what has passed. I also will keep the expression of mine eyes gloomy, as if in sooth not knowing the deeds which have been wrought. O virgin, thou hast come having bedecked with fillets the tomb of Clytæmnestra, and having poured forth libations for those below.³

HERMIONE.

I have come, having found favour. But a sort of alarm came upon me, as to what cry I heard in the house, being yet far from the palace.

ELEC. What? Things befall us worthy of lamentations.

HER. Use no inauspicious words. But what fresh event dost thou mean?

ELEC. It has seemed good to this land that Orestes and I should die.

HER. Nay, say not so, for ye are by birth my kinsmen.

³ 1322.—interrog. distinguit. Ibid. *νεπρέποις*. P.
P. "Hast thou come, etc.?"—

ELEC. It is fixed; and we are come under the yoke of necessity.

HER. Was it then for this cause also that there was a cry of wailing in the palace?

ELEC. Aye, for falling a suppliant before the knees of Helen, he beseeches her——

HER. Who? For I know no more than before, unless thou tell me.

ELEC. The wretched Orestes, that he may not die, and in my behalf also.

HER. With ⁴sufficient grounds then, in sooth, the house resounds with illomened cries.

ELEC. For concerning what other matter might one rather cry aloud? But come, and take part with thy friends in supplication, falling before thy mother so greatly prosperous, that Menelaus may not suffer us to die. But O thou who wast nurtured in my mother's arms, pity us and relieve us of our woes; come hither to the trial, and I will lead the way. For thou alone hast come to us as a goal of safety.

HER. See, I urge on my steps unto the palace; be ye preserved, at least as much as lies in my power.

ELEC. O ye, my beloved swordsmen within the palace, will ye not clutch your prey?

HER. Woe is me! who are these whom I behold?

ORESTES.

Thou must be silent. For thou hast come to preserve us, not thyself.

ELEC. Seize her, seize her, and pointing a sword to her throat, keep still, that Menelaus may know this, that having found men, not vile Phrygians, he hath fared as

⁴ 1335. ἀξιοίσι γ' ἄρ'. P. "at least, then"—

the base deserve to fare. Ho! my friends, ho! raise a din, a din and a cry, before the palace, that the murder which hath been done may not strike fearful alarm upon the Argives, so that they run to the succour to the royal abode, before I shall have seen for certain the slaughtered Helen lying steeped in gore in the house, or else before we shall have heard news from some one of the attendants. For part of what has occurred I know, but the rest not surely.

CHOR. With justice hath fallen the vengeance of the gods upon Helen. For she filled all Hellas with tears, on account of the pernicious, the pernicious Idæan Paris, who brought Hellas against Ilium. But be silent, for the bars of the royal halls give forth a sound: some one of the Phrygians issuing forth, from whom we shall hear how ⁵ matters stand in the palace.

PHRYGIAN.

Escaping death, I have fled an Argive sword, in barbarian slippers, out of well-closed chambers, inlaid with cedar, and Dorian triglyphs, in flight, in flight, O earth, earth, with barbarian speed. Woe! Woe! where may I escape, O strangers, flying up to the clear ether, or to the sea, rolling whose waves along bull-visaged ocean encircles earth with his arms?

CHOR. What is it, O attendant of Helen, man of Ida?

PHRYG. Ilium! Ilium! woe is me, woe is me! O fertile citadel of the Phrygians, holy mount of Ida, how do I lament for thy fall, lament in the chariot-strain,

⁵ 1369. Ceterum de totâ hâc scenâ observandum est, plura esse parum eleganter scripta in quibus id quæsisisse videtur

poeta ut barbaro suas cum morum, tum quâdam ex parte linguæ quoque, reservaret proprietates. Scholefield.

the chariot-strain, ⁶ with barbarian cry : for thee who didst fall through the swan-begotten, swan-feathered eye⁷ of the beauty of Leda's daughter pernicious⁸ Helen, an eye that was the fury of the well polished citadel of Troy, built by Apollo. Alas, Alas ! for woeful woeful things ! O land of Dardanus, illfated in the horsemanship⁹ of Ganymedes, the sharer of the bed of Jove.

CHOR. Tell us clearly each circumstance that has occurred within the palace. For what thou saidst before I cannot well understand by conjecture.

PHRYG. Barbarians sing woe ! woe ! for Linus ! the commencement of the deathsong, alas alas ! in Asiatic tongue, when the blood of kings has been poured forth upon the earth with the steel swords of Hades. There came unto the palace, that I may tell thee every circumstance, two twin Grecian lions : of the one, the father was celebrated as the chieftain of the host ; but the other was the son of Strophius, a deviser¹ of evil, even as Odysseus, crafty in silence ; but faithful to his friends, daring in fight, skilled in war, and a bloodthirsty serpent. May he perish, for his silent craftiness ! for he is a doer of evil. They then having entered within, up to the seat of the woman whom the archer Paris had to wife, with their faces besmeared with tears, sat down humbly one on one side and the other on the other, guarded in every direction. And they both cast, they cast their hands in supplication around the knees of Helen. And

⁶ 1385. ἀρμάτειον -- ἀρμά-
τειον τὸν θρῆνον λέγουσιν
εἶναι ὃν ἐποίησαν ἐπὶ τῷ
Ἑκτορι ἐλκομένῳ διὰ τοῦ ἄρ-
ματος. — SCH.

⁷ 1387. διὰ τὸ τᾶς — κυκνο-
πτέρου. P. of the swanfeathered

daughter.

⁸ 1388. δυσελένας bis. P.

⁹ 1393. ἵπποσύνα, P. the
horseman Ganymedes ; Dor.
gen. from ἵπποσύνης (dub.)

¹ 1403. κακόμητις. P.

the attendant Phrygians hastily leaped up; and, being alarmed, one spake with another, lest there should be some treachery. And to some indeed it seemed not so, but to others the matricidal serpent appeared to be encircling the daughter of Tyndareus in a cunningly devised net.

CHOR. And where wast thou then, or before that wast thou flying in terror?

PHRYG. I chanced, after the Phrygian, the Phrygian manner, to be stirring the breeze, the breeze, by the ringlets of Helen, of Helen, with a well wrought fan of feathers, before her cheek, after the barbarian fashion. But she was spinning thread on a spindle with her fingers, desiring to work with thread ornaments for a tomb out of the Phrygian spoils, purple garments, gifts for Clytæmnestra. But Orestes thus addressed the Laconian damsel. O daughter of Jove, set thy foot to the ground, retiring from this couch, to the seat of the ancient hearth of my forefather Pelops, that thou mayest hear my words. And he leads her, he leads her away; she followed, not foreseeing what she was about to suffer; but his accomplice the vile Phocian, having come, was busy with other matters “Will ye not hence, but are Phrygians always vile?” and he shut us out of the house, one at one place and another at another: some indeed in the stables of the horses, and others in open chambers, and others in various places, arranging so that one should be here, another there, afar off from their mistress.

CHOR. What event occurred upon this?

PHRYG. O mother, Idæan mother! mighty one, mighty one! alas for the murderous deeds of woe, and the lawless crimes which I beheld, I beheld, in the halls of princes! Having drawn forth swords in their hands

from under their purple garments, in secret, they rolled their eyes around, one in one direction, another in another, lest some one should chance to be present. And like wild boars of the mountain, standing before the woman, they address her. "Thou shalt die, thou shalt die, thy base husband slays thee, having betrayed the seed of his brother to death, in Argos. But she cried aloud, cried aloud, woe is me, woe is me. And striking her white arm against her breast, she inflicted a blow upon her miserable head; and in flight, she hurried with swift foot the tread of her golden sandals. But Orestes having thrust his hand among her locks, advancing his Mycenaean shoe, having bent back her neck over her left shoulder, was about to strike his dark sword into her throat.

CHOR. What ² succour then did the Phrygians within the palace afford?

PHRYG. With a shout, having broken open with levers the doors and the stables where we were staying, we run to the rescue, one from one part, another from another, of the house; one indeed having stones, and another javelins, and a third a drawn sword, in his hand. But there came to meet us Pylades, undaunted, even as Hector, or Aias of the triple plume whom I saw, whom I saw in the gates of Priam. And we crossed the points of our swords. Then in sooth, then the Phrygians were conspicuous, how much inferior we were to the Grecian spear in the encounter of Mars. One indeed having fled away, and another being a corpse, and a third suffering a wound, and a fourth praying for a defence against death. And we fled into concealment; but some were falling slain, and others were on the point of it, and others were

² 1472. Construction ποῦ τοῦ ἀμύνειν ἦσαν οἱ κ. στ. φρ.; cf.

Soph. Œd. Col. 335. οἱ δ' ἀνθρώποι ποῦ νεάνια πονεῖν;

lying dead. But the wretched Hermione came to the palace upon the blood of her mother that bedewed the ground, her illfated mother who brought her forth. And like Bacchanals, but with no Thyrsus, they twain rushing upon her clutched her in their hands like a whelp on the mountains; and returning back again they designed slaughter ³ to the daughter of Jove. But she had vanished from the chamber through the walls of the palace, O Jove and Earth and light and night! either by means of drugs or the arts of magicians, or being conveyed away by the gods. But what followed I know not any more; for I stole away in flight from the palace. But Menelaus having endured the suffering of many many toils, to little profit hath recovered from Troy Helen his bride.

CHOR. But see here, novelty succeeds novelty; for I see Orestes sword in hand advancing in front of the palace with winged foot.

ORESTES.

Where is he who has fled from my sword out of the palace?

PHRYG. I worship thee, O king, falling before thee in barbarian fashion.

ORES. This is not in Ilium but in the land of Argos.

PHRYG. Everywhere, to the prudent 'tis sweet rather to live than to die.

ORES. Didst thou not raise a clamour, ⁴ for the Argives to come to the succour of Menelaus?

PHRYG. Not I, but that they should help thee; for thou art more worthy.

³ 1494. ἐπι. Scribendum ἐπι. Dind. ἐπι, P. proceeded to the slaughter, against etc.

⁴ Otherwise, for Menelaus to come to the rescue—cf. 614. Scholefield.

ORES. As it seems, the daughter of Tyndareus perished justly?

PHRYG. Most justly, even if she had had three throats so as to die thrice.

ORES. Thou art courting me with cowardly tongue, not thinking so in thy heart.

PHRYG. Why, has she not justly perished who ruined Hellas and the Phrygians also?

ORES. Swear, or if not I will slay thee, that thou art not speaking to pleasure me.

PHRYG. I have sworn by mine own soul, with regard to which I should not forswear myself.

ORES. In Troy also, was the sword such an object of dread to all the Phrygians?

PHRYG. Keep away thy sword; for if near it reflects fearful bloodshed.

ORES. Fearest thou lest thou become a stone, having looked, as it were, upon a Gorgon?

PHRYG. Nay, but a corpse rather. But the Gorgon I know not.

ORES. Being a slave, dost thou fear Hades, who will free thee from woe?

PHRYG. Every man, even if he be a slave, feels pleasure in beholding the light of day.

ORES. Thou sayest well; thy ready wit saves thee; but go within the palace.

PHRYG. Wilt thou not slay me, then?

ORES. Thou art spared.

PHRYG. This is good tidings that thou tellest.

ORES. But I will change my intention.

PHRYG. This thou sayest not well.

ORES. Fool, if thou thinkest that I would condescend to stain thy neck with blood. For thou wast not born

a woman, nor yet art *thou* among men. But I came forth from the palace that thou mightest not set up a shouting: for Argos when it hears a cry is readily aroused. But we have no fear of catching Menelaus within reach of the sword; but let him go, exulting in his yellow locks curling over his shoulders. For if, taking the Argives, he shall bring them against this house, avenging the murder of Helen, and will not save me and my sister and Pylades who is my accomplice in these deeds, he shall see both the virgin and his wife two corpses.

CHOR. O fortune, fortune, into another conflict, another again, and a fearful one as regards the sons of Atreus this house is falling.

SEMICH. A. What are we to do? ought we to announce these things to the city? or to preserve them in silence?

SEMICH. B. That is more safe, my friends.

SEMICH. A. See before the palace, see, this smoke hastening up into the air is the herald of the future.

SEMICH. B. They are kindling torches, to fire the house of Tantalus, and desist not from blood.⁵

CHOR. The Deity has rule over the result, has rule over the result for mortals, to effect it in whatever way he wills. And great ⁶ is the power: through an avenging deity these halls have fallen, have fallen, in bloodshed, by reason of the casting of Myrtilus from out the car.—But lo, I see Menelaus also here near the palace, with hasty step advancing, having heard, I suppose, the misfortune which now environs him. Ye cannot be too speedy in closing the bolts with bars, O ye children of

⁵ 1545—8. Semich. trib. P.

Ibid. δι' ἀλαστόρων. P.

⁶ 1547. ἄ om. P.

Atreus who are within the house. A fearful thing is a prosperous man, against those who are unfortunate, as thou, Orestes, now sufferest misfortune.

MENELAUS.

I am come hearing of the fearful and violent deeds of the two lions; for two men I call them not. For I have heard, in sooth, concerning my yokefellow, that she is not dead, but has vanished away; hearing an empty rumour, which some one reported to me, who was deceived by fear. But these are the contrivances of the matricide and are highly ridiculous. Let some one open the door of the palace; I order my attendants to force open these portals, that at least we may rescue my daughter from the hands of bloodstained men, and may recover my illfated wretched wife; with whom those must die by my hand who have slain my yokefellow.

ORESTES.

Ho thou, touch not these bolts with thy hand! Thee Menelaus I meant, who art lifted on high with insolence: or I will crush thy head with this coping stone, naving broken off an ancient cornice, the labour of the mason. And the bolts are fastened with bars, and they will restrain thee from thy zealous succour, so that thou shalt not pass into the house.

MEN. Ha, what is this? I see the light of torches and these defending themselves on the top of the palace, and a sword awaiting my daughter's throat.

ORES. Wishest thou to ask questions, or to hear me speak?

MEN. Neither of the two. But I must, as it seems, hear thee.

ORES. I am about to slay thy daughter, if thou desirest to know.

MEN. Having murdered Helen, art thou committing murder upon murder?

ORES. Would that I now had hold of her and had not been cheated of her by the gods!

MEN. Dost thou deny that thou hast slain her, and sayest thou these things to insult me?

ORES. I do, with pain: For O that I had—

MEN. Done what? For thou terrifiest me.

ORES. Cast the ⁷ polluter of Greece into the realm of Hades.

MEN. Restore me the corpse of my wife that I may cover her with a tomb.

ORES. Demand her of the gods; but thy daughter I will slay.

MEN. The matricide is committing murder upon murder.

ORES. The avenger of his father, whom thou didst betray to death.

MEN. Did ⁸ not the blood of thy mother, already shed, suffice thee?

ORES. I should not be wearied of slaying evil women for ever.

MEN. Can it be that thou also, Pylades, takest part in this murder?

ORES. He assents by silence: but it will be sufficient for me to speak.

MEN. But not at all with impunity, unless at least thou fliest away with wings.

ORES. We do not mean to fly. But we will burn the house with fire.

⁷ 1584. *μιάστωρ*, evil genius. SCHOLEF.

⁸ 1589. *πάρος*. P. the former murder.

MEN. What ! wilt thou indeed destroy this the house of thy fathers ?

ORES. Aye, I will, so that thou mayest not possess it, having slaughtered this damsel over the fire.

MEN. Slay her : for if thou slayest her, thou shalt give me satisfaction for these deeds.

ORES. So it shall be.

MEN. Hold, hold ! by no means do this !

ORES. Be silent then, and endure to suffer misfortune justly.

MEN. What, is it just that thou shouldst live ?

ORES. Aye, and rule the land.

MEN. What land ?

ORES. In this Pelasgian Argos.

MEN. Well in sooth couldst thou touch the sacred water——

ORES. And prithee why not ?

MEN. And sacrifice victims before battle.

ORES. And couldst thou do so becomingly ?

MEN. Aye, for I am pure as to my hands.

ORES. But not as to thy heart.

MEN. And who would speak to thee ?

ORES. Whoever loves his father.

MEN. But whoever honours his mother ?

ORES. Is a happy man.

MEN. Thou therefore art not happy.

ORES. No, for bad women please not me.

MEN. Remove thy sword from my daughter.

ORES. Thou art a liar.

MEN. But wilt thou slay my daughter ?

ORES. Thou liest no longer.

MEN. Woe is me ! what shall I do ?

ORES. Go to the Argives and persuade them ——

MEN. To do what?

ORES. Ask the city not to slay us.

MEN. Or ye will murder my child?

ORES. Thus the case stands.

MEN. O wretched Helen!

ORES. And is not my lot wretched?

MEN. I conveyed her from among the Phrygians to be thy ⁹ victim—

ORES. O that this had been so!

MEN. Having endured innumerable toils.

ORES. Except against me, at least.

MEN. Fearful things I have suffered.

ORES. Aye, for at that time of need thou wast useless.

MEN. Thou hast caught me.

ORES. Aye, thou hast caught thyself, having been base. But come, set fire to this palace, Electra; and thou, Pylades, truest of all my friends to me, fire these cornices of the battlements.

MEN. O land of Danaus and ye inhabitants of Argos abounding in steeds, will ye not hither to the rescue with well armed foot? For this man lives in defiance of your entire city, having committed the abominable murder of his mother.

APOLLO.

Menelaus, cease from having thy fury thus sharply excited; I, Phœbus the son of Latona, who am near thee, call thee; and thou too, Orestes, who sword in hand art watching over this damsel, that thou mayest hear the tidings bearing which I have come. Helen, in the first place, whom thou being so ready to slay didst fail of

⁹ 1614. σὲ. I brought *thee* to be etc.—P.

her, incensing Menelaus against thee, is she there, whom ye behold in the cloudclefts of ether, preserved and not slain by thy hand. I saved her and snatched her from thy sword at the command of father Jove. For being of the race of Jove it was ordained that she should live imperishable ; and she will sit with Castor and Polydeuces in the cloudclefts of ether, a star of safety for seamen. But get thee another bride, receiving her into thy house, since the gods by the exceeding beauty of this woman brought together Greeks and Phrygians in strife, and caused many deaths, that they might draw off from the earth the wantonness of mortals which had reached its full height.¹ As regards Helen indeed thus matters stand : But for thee again Orestes, it is ordained that thou pass over the boundaries of this land and dwell in the Parthasian plain for a revolving year. And the place shall have a name derived from thine exile among Azanians and Arcadians, so that they shall call it Oresteium : and thence having gone to the city of the Athenians, undergo a trial for matricidal bloodshed, at the prosecution of the three Eumenides : but the gods, judges in thy suit, shall pass a most religious sentence on the hills of Mars, in which it is fated for thee to be victorious. And Hermione, at whose throat, Orestes, thou keepest thy sword, it is decreed that thou shalt wed ; but Neoptolemus, who thinks that he will marry her, shall never have her to wife. For it is fated for him to die by a Delphian sword, when demanding satisfaction from me for his father Achilles : but give to Pylades thy sister's bed, to whom thou didst formerly

¹ 1639 seq. This account of the origin of the Trojan war is derived from the CYPRIA of

Stasinus, a Cyclic poet ; who is supposed to have lived not earlier than about the 1st. Ol.

agree to give it: and happy is the succeeding life that awaits him. And do thou, Menelaus, suffer Orestes to rule over Argos, but go thyself and be king over the land of Sparta, possessing the dowry of the wife, who involving thee in innumerable toils, even until now has been bringing thee to this crisis.—And as regards the city, I will arrange matters satisfactorily for this man, I who compelled him to murder his mother.

ORES. O prophetic Loxias, thou wast then no false prophet in thy divine responses, but a true one. And yet fear entered my mind lest, in fact hearing one of the avenging deities, I might fancy I heard thy voice. But all comes to a happy end, and I will obey thy words. Lo! I release Hermione from slaughter, I consent to her bed, whenever her father gives her to me.

MEN. O Helen daughter of Jove, farewell, O damsel! But I envy thee having gone to dwell in the happy abode of the gods. And to thee Orestes I betroth my daughter, at the behest of Phœbus; and being noble and born of a noble father, mayest thou be prosperous in thy marriage, both thou and I who give thee the bride.

APOL. Depart then each of you thither where I appoint, and be reconciled from contention.

MEN. We must obey.

ORES. I also agree to this; and I make a truce with calamity, Menelaus, and with thy oracles, O Loxias.

APOL. Go ye then on your way, honouring Peace, the fairest of goddesses. But I will convey Helen near to the halls of Jove, having accomplished my journey to the firmament of bright stars; where sitting by the side of Hera and of Hebe the spouse of Hercules she shall be a

goddess to mortals, for ever honoured with libations; with the Tyndarids, the sons of Jove, a guardian goddess of the sea for sailors.

[CHOR. O Victory greatly venerated, mayest thou dwell with me through my life, and never cease crowning me with chaplets.]²

² 1691. Iidem versus loquuntur in fine Phœnissarum et Iphigeniæ Tauricæ, τοῦτο διὰ τοῦ χοροῦ ὡς ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ

ποιητοῦ ἐστίν, ὡς νικήσαντος [pot. νικήσοντος] ἐν τῷ δράματι. Schol.—DIND.

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